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Coffee Break program meets 'Life Challenge'

Jessie Schut
EDMONTON — When Deborah Grey, Reform Party MP and deputy party leader, spoke to women at a Coffee Break Rally in Edmonton recently, she told them not to run away from challenges, but to face them head on.

Grey knows all about challenges. She acknowledges that accepting challenges has not always made her life easy, but she looks to the story of Esther for inspiration and encouragement. Like Esther, Grey has been a woman in an unusual situation. Grey found herself the

only Reform MP in the federal government when she accepted a challenge to run in an Alberta by-election in 1988. She'd had no experience in government and had to leave a job and a close community she loved to take up her responsibilities in Ottawa.

Like Esther, she felt stripped of all her support. "I told God, 'There's just me and you together here, Lord; but all they see is me. You'll have to help me here.'"

Her parliamentary colleagues belittled and patronized her. One of them said to her, "You've got more guts than Gainers [a local meat packing plant]."

Her comfort lay in identifying with Mordecai's words to Esther: "Who knows but that you have come to royal position for such a time as this?"



Deborah Grey and a young friend at an Edmonton Coffee Break Rally

First Eastern Canada disability conference offers satisfying menu



Joni Eareckson Tada signs autographs

Marian Van Til
WATERLOO, Ont. — The 200 or so people who attended the Eastern Canada Disability Conference held May 10 to 12 at Wilfrid Laurier University would tell you that the conference was a royal banquet. The food imagery relates to the theme "At the King's Table" — a reference to King David's bringing the lame Mephibosheth, son of his friend Jonathan, to feast at his table.

The theme stressed inclusion and awareness. That was evident in the 21 workshop topics; in Joni Eareckson Tada's keynote address; in the music by Joni, by Colleen and Grace, and by DBS and Interregnum; in the simultaneous programs for children with disabilities; and in the concluding Sunday worship.

Many workshops were very specifically from the disabled person's point of view (e.g., "Can anyone understand how I

feel?") Some were aimed at the parents or siblings of the disabled. Several were addressed to the able-bodied (e.g., dispelling myths about disabilities). One session addressed "invisible disabilities" such as chronic fatigue syndrome.

Joni an inspiration

Many disabled conferees were buoyed by Joni's intimate talk on the opening evening. A dive into too-shallow water in the Chesapeake Bay at age 17 resulted in her becoming a quadriplegic. For some years now she has been well known as a speaker and author.

Judi van Noort introduced Joni to the audience. Van Noort, who is 36, felt the first symptoms of multiple sclerosis (MS) at 17; for three years now she has needed a wheelchair when she ventures outside her home.

"Joni talked of the struggle with 'How can I go on?'; with wanting to kill yourself," said van Noort in an interview with CC. Van Noort has had the same feeling, and in fact tried it. She was saved by the vision of her two daughters growing up without a mother. In her despair her intellectual belief that only God has the right to take life didn't matter. Van Noort has come a long way since then and says now, "I can't imagine now

See BODY page 2...

You won't regret committing to Jesus

Grey spoke to a group of 140 women at a "Life Challenge" rally, sponsored by the Northern Alberta Coffee Break programs. Coffee Break programs, developed by the Christian Reformed Church, stress low-key evangelism by letting the Bible speak for itself. Life Challenge rallies annual events at which women are openly invited to make Jesus the Savior of their lives. At the end of her presentation, Grey challenged women to give their lives to Jesus, as she had done as a rebellious teenager. "You'll never regret it," she stated.

Joanne Van Beek, regional representative for Coffee Break,

believes that Life Challenge rallies are an important feature of the Coffee Break program.

"Every year that we've done these rallies, we've had women who dedicated their lives to the Lord for the first time, and this year was no exception," she said. "Coffee Break programs need to be on their guard to ensure that they don't just become a cozy women's group, studying the Bible together. Our mission, after all, is outreach. We need to challenge ourselves to be sure that's what we're doing."

Grey's words were an encouragement for the leaders of
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News

See us as people like yourselves, disabled plead

Marian Van Til

WATERLOO, Ont. — Ben Vandezande, Ontario CRC diaconal co-ordinator and a member of the conference planning committee, was struck by Joni Eareckson Tada's children's talk on Sunday morning about blind Bartemaues—who was healed by Christ. "Joni said something which I had never noticed," says Vandezande. "No matter what page you turn to in Matthew, Mark, Luke or John, Jesus is always hanging out with the disabled or the sick. These were folks who in that culture were fourth class."

"Another thing she pointed out was: when Bartemaues calls to Jesus, the disciples react by telling him to shut up. When Jesus says, 'Come over,' they get friendly and say, 'Welcome, welcome.' That seems to be the church's reaction to the disabled; there's ambiguity in the message, and disabled people

have to deal with that."

Judi van Noort of Ancaster, Ont., who is mostly confined to a wheelchair because of MS, has experienced that first hand. "We expect our Christian brothers and sisters, especially, to be there for us and they're not."

Why not? "It's not that they don't care. There's a lot of fear," van Noort explains. "People need to become comfortable with it, and we can help them do that if we're comfortable with our disability ourselves."

But it helps if people have open minds. There are church members who have actually told van Noort, "There must be some sin in your life or you wouldn't have this"; or: "We must not be praying hard enough because you're not getting well." Even van Noort's own brother refused to see her for four years when she first used a wheelchair. He rationalized that her being in the wheelchair meant she had given

up; but that meant he didn't have to confront her disability.

Snapping the lid on a garbage can

Such experiences aren't foreign to Catherine Badgley of London, Ont., who has cerebral palsy (CP). In the days when First CRC in London was much less aware than it is now of disabilities, Catherine felt "frustrated with being overlooked all the time. For years I sat in the back [like I was] without a body." She graphically describes how that made her feel: "It was like I was in a garbage can and somebody snapped the lid on."

That being overlooked also often occurs in the form of others making decisions for the disabled person, as if they are mentally incompetent. Other church members will decide for the disabled person whether he or she will be able to be an officebearer, serve on this



Catherine Badgley

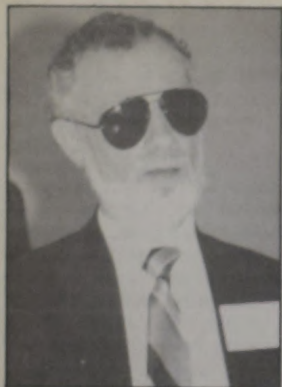
committee, do that job. "We'd like to be asked, and to decide for ourselves whether we're capable of doing a job," was the general consensus.

Rev. Jim Vander Laan, who is blind, is the director of the

Christian Reformed Church's committee on disability concerns. He says it's relatively easy to remove physical barriers. The main task in the church is the much harder one of making emotional and mental barriers against the disabled give way.

And there's a task beyond that, he pointed out to those in his workshop "The Enfolding Church": "Despite the problems encountered by the disabled here, remember you're hearing about people attached to the church, who do have a community around them. Four out of five disabled people are not attached to the church; pain, embarrassment or frustration have broken those ties. There is an enormous mission field among the disabled, who are as pre-disposed as any group in society to receiving the love of Christ, if it's presented to them in a convincing way."

Seeing a need and meeting it



Rev. Jim Vander Laan

Marian Van Til

WATERLOO, Ont. — Rev. Jim, Vander Laan of Grand Rapids, Mich., director of the Christian Reformed Church's

committee on disability concerns, and Bert Zwiens of Burlington, Ont., chairperson of that committee, suggested a disabilities conference in Ontario to a small ad hoc group gathered at the November 1993 meeting of the Council of Christian Reformed Churches in Canada.

Zwiens and others took it from there, forming an 11-person committee to plan and organize the event and using as a model an interdenominational disabilities conference in the American Midwest in which many Christian Reformed people were involved. Some of the organizers are themselves disabled, and some, through diaconal, chaplaincy or other work, come into regular contact with disabled people.

A conscious decision was made to focus on physical dis-

abilities only, says planning committee chairperson Peter De Bruyne. "At first I had some problems with that because I have a daughter who is mentally handicapped. But it was a good decision. If we didn't do that, we'd be overwhelmed; and there are already some things in place — like *Friendship* for example — for the mentally handicapped."

Satisfaction in a job well done

Everyone agreed, based on their own feelings and on reactions from disabled attendees, that the conference met needs, doing what it set out to do.

There were just a few things they'd do differently next time (they hope there will be a next time), says De Bruyne. For one, they wouldn't go back to Wilfrid Laurier. The university was the best they could do in the circumstances, and it is fairly centrally located, De Bruyne notes, but "the facilities were too spread out, and the bad weather (cold and rain) didn't help." And there were lots of stairs to climb, especially if you didn't know your way around and how to avoid them. "The prayer rooms, especially, were way away from where people were," says De Bruyne, "so they

weren't used very much."

Having no choice of food on Saturday was also a problem for people with allergies or on special diets.

"This kind of thing should be held in a hotel," De Bruyne suggests, where you've got everything you need in one place. He'll make these observations to the planning committee at its

wrap-up meeting in the near future. In final assessment De Bruyne says, "I was very happy with how things went. I was impressed by the many volunteers who gave their all and were extremely organized and on the ball. They knew what they were doing. And the people who attended were excited about what was happening."

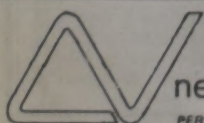
Body is God's canvas

... continued from page 1
that I ever felt like that."

She says Joni's attitude "legitimizes you; she validates those feelings" you have about your disability, and about how others treat you. "It's a risk to be as vulnerable as she is when she speaks; we owe her a debt for taking that risk."

Your body is God's canvas

Before Christ returns and all things will be made new — something every disabled Christian longs for intensely — the challenge is: how to view your body and yourself. "Joni talked of our bodies as God's canvas that he uses to paint portraits of himself," says Van Noort. "It's what we do with that portrait that reflects who he is to other people." Van Noort adds, from her own heart, "We have to be faithful in our lives to what God tells us in his Word and the calling that he gives us. We want out of it, but God has a higher purpose we cannot see. Job questioned what God did with him also, but God told him: 'Do you know my ways? Did you create everything?' God has used me [through my MS] anywhere and everywhere, in so many ways. Suffering gives you the gift of caring. We have the choice in this to follow or not follow."



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Politics/News

Will Reform go the way of the Progressives?

A few months ago after the last federal election, I posed for my Canadian politics class a hypothetical scenario in which the Progressive Conservative Party decides to merge with the Reform Party and rename itself the "Progressive Conservative Reform Party." My students smiled at this, but my prognostication was not meant to be entirely tongue-in-cheek. After all, there are precedents. In 1942 the federal Conservative Party named as its leader John Bracken, the Progressive premier of Manitoba. The newly rechristened *Progressive Conservatives* thus hoped to attract supporters of the Progressive Party, a western protest party that had burst out of the Prairies in the 1921 election, gaining the second highest number of seats in the Commons.

In the past couple of months the possibility of a merger has been floated by people within the Reform Party and within provincial Conservative circles. It would seem to make sense. With the Liberals firmly ensconced in Ottawa and the potential opposition fragmented, an amalgamation would apparently offer the only realistic hope of dislodging "Canada's natural governing party." For those who think of politics solely in terms of left and right, it is logical to reunite the right to defeat the left.

Two kinds of 'rightists'

But politics is more complex than that. To label both Jean Charest and Preston Manning "rightists" is to overlook the considerable differences between them. The Conservatives represent an approach based on respect for peace, order and good government, all within the framework of a British-style constitutional monarchy. By contrast, the Reform Party is closer to American-style classical liberalism, with its affection for lower taxes, free markets and direct democratic measures such as the referendum and the recall. To bring these visions together would not be easy.

There is a second reason why Conservatives and Reformers are not likely to get together in the near future. Reform's showing in the 1993 election was impressive, while the Conservatives were nearly obliterated. Yet it is by no means certain that Reform will have staying power over the long term. Again there are precedents. By 1926, only five years after their unexpected success, the Progressives had lost every seat they had held in the Commons. Both Charest and Manning will want to wait until Canadians go to the polls again to see what the public has in store for their respective parties.

As the recent controversy over Bob Ringma and David Chatters indicates, Reform is still institutionally fragile. Our political system places a premium on disciplined parties capable of acting in unified fashion on issues of public policy. But Reform would like to tie its MPs as individuals to the voters in their home ridings, much as members of Congress are to their home districts in the U.S. This would effectively weaken party solidarity, thereby depriving it of its ability to mount an effective challenge to the government, much less to govern on its own.

If the Conservatives hope to make a comeback and recover their historic place in Canada's political landscape, they will have to move beyond their traditional pragmatic orientation and develop a principled alternative doing justice to all citizens and communities.

If Reform hopes to capitalize on its current parliamentary position and make an enduring place for itself, it will need to abandon its willingness simply to cater to the popular will, and, instead, seek to exercise genuine leadership. Moreover, it must ultimately come to terms with Quebec's unique place in confederation. Failing these, it may go the way of the Progressives.

David T. Koyzis teaches political science at Redeemer College, Ancaster, Ont., which is not in Sheila Copps' riding.

POLITICS

David Koyzis



Coffee Break gets revitalized

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Covenant Christian Reformed Church's Coffee Break program in Edmonton. When the group started 10 years ago, the program was very successful, growing by leaps and bounds and ministering to a wide variety of women. Recently, however, the leaders were beginning to feel that the program was in a rut, with fewer new faces coming to the meetings. Leaders were tired and wondering whether the program was accomplishing its mission. Judy Slomp, who was one of the leaders, remembers thinking, "I'm not sure I want to do this next year. I'm not sure this is where we're meant to be."

In February, Covenant leaders met the challenge by gathering to discuss ideas that would help to revitalize their program. At the end of the evening, they had come up with strategies that would take risks — like Grey did when she ran for political office.

"Usually we have an Easter brunch for our members, but this

time, we decided to really make it an outreach effort," says Slomp. "We invited our congregation to be part of that outreach. After all, Coffee Break is not just a Wednesday morning gathering of women. It's a way of thinking, and outreach is everybody's job."

Gardening hook

The leaders invited Lois Hole, a high-profile local gardener and author, to speak on spring gardening. They prepared commitment cards and gave them out one Sunday morning to the congregation, asking for women to commit to asking a neighbor to the brunch. Quite a number of women responded positively to the challenge. "When I committed to asking my neighbor to the brunch, I knew I'd be doing something I've often thought about," said one woman. While she couldn't come, she was pleasantly surprised by the invitation, and thanked me for my interest. It opened a door to further discussion."

The leaders also invited

further congregational involvement through prayer support and donations of food. Several weeks before the event, six leaders took a morning to canvass the neighborhood around the church. They rang doorbells, presenting personal invitations to the residents. The results of the "challenge" were overwhelming. A total of 54 women, rather than the usual 20, attended.

While the guests may have been attracted to the brunch, by the presence of Hole, and the free food, they also heard the testimony of Joy Monsma, a congregation member, who followed Hole's presentation on plant growth with some thoughts on spiritual growth. Judy Slomp also introduced the Coffee Break program, and invited women to consider coming in the fall. Six women indicated an interest.

"I really feel excited about the program again," says Slomp. "If we get just one new person to our program who doesn't know Jesus, it will be worth it."

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Editorial

'Help us feel truly convinced we are productive'

I think I have a renewed sense of why mothers are so important. I heard and read a few things on and around Mother's Day that chased away some pollution emitted by gender feminists. Together these messages helped me realize that, while women have made important and necessary gains in the area of equal opportunity, radical feminists have pushed our society to the brink of disaster.

The first breath of fresh air came in church, a good place to look for that kind of thing. I heard a mother pray the following prayer on Mother's Day during congregational prayer (I have her permission to reprint her prayer, which was faithfully recorded on the worship tape):

Lord, today is Mother's day. I would like to pray for all mothers, particularly those who have made a commitment to stay home and raise their children while these children are young. Lord,

for those at home all the time it can some times be alienating, and there's not always a lot of support and respect from a society that puts such high priority on production and profit making and visible accomplishment.

Help us to feel truly convinced that when we raise our kids at home we are being productive. We are raising and teaching, instructing and nurturing your future servants.

Help us to have a sense of pride. And help us also, Lord, to recognize that you have given us this privilege, this calling, and that our work is worthy even though we are not being paid for it.

Help us to dedicate our children to you, to instruct them about you and to teach them everything that we know. Make yourself present in our lives, and help us to have a good attitude about serving our families — not just our children whom we love and serve with natural motherly instincts, but help us also to be kind and loving and unselfish towards our husbands who work hard to provide a secure home for us.

Help us always to serve with the attitude of Christ, as we do it for the least of these our brethren we do it for you. I pray that in this way your love and your presence may be real in our homes, so that our children may grow up to know you, to believe in you and to share you with those that they meet.

It was a heartfelt prayer coming from the lips of a young stay-at-home mother who experiences the struggle of taking on an important task without getting sufficient recognition for it. I would hope that the church is still a place where such recognition is freely given.

Even Mary Poppins is second-best

I was reminded of this prayer when I read in the April issue of *Saturday Night* magazine an article that deals with motherhood's greatest joy and darkest secret: a mother can't stop thinking about her child. The author, Danielle Crittenden, laments the fact that in all the discussions about problems faced by working mothers the fact that these mothers want to be with their children goes unmentioned.

The reason for this omission, says the author, is that for the past few decades advocates of female equality have told women that they will be more fulfilled if they leave the home and join the work force. That many women who have done this have not become happier has been blamed on the lack of adequate child care. But, says Crittenden, even if "the government could announce tomorrow a system of completely free daycare centres, each one headed by Mary Poppins..., the problem wouldn't go away. For despite three decades of reassurances to the contrary, the woman who kisses her child's forehead each morning before walking out the door to her office still harbors the agonizing

suspicion that what the child needs most is *her*."

The seeming unfairness of this proposition should be laid at the door of nature, not politicians, writes Crittenden.

This article entitled "The Mother of All Problems" certainly is a welcome bit of honesty in a situation that has politicized child care and a woman's need to be fulfilled so that many look down on those women who stay home to raise their children. When I think of that mother praying her prayer on Mother's Day, I find an even healthier attitude because she talks about a calling from God to nurture children.

Recognition of historic contribution

A few days later I read an article in the *Globe and Mail* written by Catherine Buchanan, national secretary of Kids First Parents Association of Canada, and that again affirmed the importance of parental nurture of children.

Buchanan points out that the suicide rate among young Canadians rose 600 per cent between 1955 and 1995 and that youth crime is far more violent than it used to be. She traces the cause of young people's discontent directly to lack of parental involvement.

Without saying that women should assume sole responsibility for raising children, she nevertheless wants to acknowledge "the enormous contribution women have made, historically, to the nurturing of children, to healthy family functioning." She concludes by writing that "parents are not easily replaced. Their presence or, conversely, their absence from their children matters."

It's good to see articles like these appear in major Canadian publications. The first one affirms what must be seen as a creational given: most mothers want to be primary care givers. The second article uses historical evidence to show that mothers (or parents) know best how to raise children.

The woman in church prayed, "Help us feel truly convinced that when we raise our kids at home, we are being truly 'productive.'" May articles like the ones mentioned in this editorial help convince stay-at-home parents that they are being far more productive than those who leave the home to punch in numbers or assemble cars. It's important that governments recognize this contribution as well and give tax breaks or other incentives to parents raising their children at home.

BW

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No Issue on May 31, 1996

In keeping with our no-issue schedule (see box on page 5), we will not publish an issue on May 31, 1996. Deadline for the next issue (June 7) is Wednesday, May 29, 1996.

Letters

Not free to repent from sin and accept Christ

Thank you for raising the matter of Arminianism in your editorial on Mission Niagara (May 17). I'm glad that you see no conflict between inviting people to decide for Christ and the doctrine of predestination. As a counsellor at this Franklin Graham Crusade, I experienced the hard reality of how a Calvinistic church's rejection of the Graham Crusade stood in the way of a young man's quest for salvation.

Just before Graham's Invitation, a 15-year-old girl from Colorado, who with her parents was on the Graham team, felt God telling her to sit beside a young guy who had some buddies sitting next to him. She did and introduced herself. Then, moved by God, she asked him what his problem was. He replied that he

had no problem at all. She asked him again, and this time he admitted that he had a drinking problem.

The young girl told him that, if he wanted to straighten out his life, he should go forward and be part of the Invitation. When the young guy followed her advice, his buddies started laughing and snickering.

Providential encounter

Once at the front, the girl's father directed the young man to me. I had not wanted to be up front at first, but because I was sitting next to editor Bert Witvoet and had answered questions about Mission Niagara I wanted to show him that I was connected with the Crusade. So in God's providence I moved to the front to

be available as counsellor.

The problem with having to counsel this young man was that I knew him, and he knew me. I could see that he was uncomfortable. Fortunately, a member of the Maranatha Praise Band came forward and asked if he could take over as counsellor. I felt relieved because it seemed that I would not be much good.

The next day I asked the singer from the Maranatha Praise Band what had become of this young fellow. He told me that he had refused to accept Christ as his Savior and that he had a drinking problem.

Like I said, I know this young man. His parents are members of a church that had publicly stated that they did not want to support the Franklin Graham Crusade.

Knowing this young man, I would say that he was influenced by that statement. He probably did not want to look ridiculous in front of his buddies, and he was confused by his church's position.

All of this makes it difficult to do follow-up work with him. His church has closed the doors on us, probably because we are judged to be "Arminian" in our approach. Yet I was asked by a Graham team member to do the required follow-up work, which I will do. I ask for your prayerful support so that God can knock down a few more walls and add another name to the Book of Life through this young man's decision.

George Prins
Ridgville, Ont.

We don't know enough about North Atlantic ecology

John Wood is to be congratulated on his excellent column (April 26, 1996) on the Atlantic seal fishery. He correctly points to the intricacies of environmental problems and accurately observes that to increase the seal hunt quotas because the mammal eats cod is a dangerous rationale. Several points can be made, however, to strengthen Wood's contention that ecologies are complex and interrelated systems.

In the first place, Wood observes that "we got into this mess [the near extinction of the cod] because we consistently ignored warnings by technicians." It should be remembered, however, that for decades they (presumably Department of Fisheries scientists and their political masters) encouraged fishers to upgrade their technology and efficiency and that until the sudden imposition of the moratorium, they set unrealistically high quotas.

In fact, it was an historian, Dr. Leslie Harris, past president of Memorial University, who publicly, consistently, and insistently warned that modern high tech trawlers were about to destroy the northern breeding stock. DFO consistently disregarded his prophesies — often echoed by inshore fishers — of an impending ecological disaster.

Environmental causes

Secondly, while overfishing was definitely a major contributing factor to the disappearance of the cod stock and continues to be for other species both in the Atlantic and Pacific regions, current research points to environmental factors as part of the problem. These may be pollution, ozone depletion, migratory patterns, as well as water temperatures. What is becoming increasingly clear is that the scientists and technicians at DFO, who rely on minuscule samples and

laboratory techniques, hardly understand the complexities of the cod's life cycle.

Thirdly, it must be recognized that the seal hunt has a long history and was halted in recent times only because of animal rights movements. This year's total allowable catch of 250,000 seals is still less than the 1902 record export of 528,000 skins.

Economic boost

Meanwhile, as a very labor intensive endeavor, this year's hunt, the most successful in a decade, has injected almost \$10 million into Newfoundland's decaying outports. Moreover, and most importantly, the hunt has implanted a new sense of hope among a generation of despondent inshore fishers. Perhaps their way of life may not yet be obsolete.

While Newfoundlanders gladly seize on the environmental argument — that seals are delaying the restoration of the cod fishery — because it serves their purpose, they are hunting seals mainly because they need the work and income.

Lastly, it is heartening to note that the sealing industry has implemented a full utilization program. In the recent past, seals were killed primarily for their pelts and flippers, while the meat was left to rot on the ice. Today, processors purchase the entire carcass and utilize most of it. In fact, seal oil may once again become a most valuable product.

Nevertheless, John Wood is quite correct in pointing out that hunters, scientists, and politicians must act cautiously. Since they do not understand even the most fundamental principles of the complex North Atlantic ecology, any hunt is fraught with dangerous and unpredictable consequences.

Andy den Otter
St. John's, Newfoundland

All of us must go and tell

With all the talk and discussion over Paul's commandment in 1 Timothy 2:11-15 regarding women not being allowed to have authority over men, I find it odd that what Jesus tells us in Matthew 20:24-28, Mark 10:35-45 and Luke 22:24-30 has not been part of the subject. For in those passages we read that no one should lord it over another.

And what about at Jesus' tomb? It was not the men, but the women who were there. And what were they given? Yes, an order to go and tell.

And they went, even though, as we read in Luke 24:11, the women got laughed at. Still, they had been given the same order we all have been given, in Matthew 28:5-7, and 18-20 — go and tell.

But no, we like to argue and say, "you can't do that," while at the same time we know from Galatians 3:28, that there is no difference between male and female in Christ.

So what gives? And what do I have to repent of?

Jan Jansma
Port Alberni, B.C.

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Environment

EFP helps grower make production system choice

Kerri-Sue Lang

OTTAWA (NC) — A collection system for greenhouse leachate is good for tomatoes, for the pocketbook and for the environment, says Angelo Mastronardi. He and Joni Mastronardi grow over two acres of greenhouse tomatoes hydroponically on their Ruthven, Ont., farm.

In the fall of 1993, Angelo heard about the Environmental Farm Plan through the greenhouse board. Always interested in learning how to do things a little better, he thought the workshops sounded worthwhile.

Today, he knows he was right. "I learned a lot of things from the plan," says Mastronardi, "things I never thought about before. Once you think about them, they are mostly just common sense. But when you're so busy farming, you never get a chance to question some of the



Angelo Mastronardi invested in a system to collect and recycle greenhouse leachate.

things you do every day."

As most farmers have, the Mastronardis have invested a lot of money in their business. They

want to make sure they are doing things right. Currently, they are in the process of switching their last greenhouse from growing tomatoes in the soil to a hydroponic system called Nutrient Film Technique. This system involves starting a tomato plant in a three-inch cube of rockwool, a synthetic growing medium. The cubes sit on a sheet of thick black plastic that is wrapped around the roots and stapled along the top to form a trough. A constantly recirculating trickle of water covers the roots and provides all the nutrients the plants need.

Sophisticated monitoring

Nutrient concentrations and pH levels of the water are monitored by a series of sophisticated electronic metering systems. The water is collected and redistributed with his newly installed leachate system. Water

lines running from all the greenhouses converge into a central receptacle where the water falls from a height of about two metres into a large concrete well. The water is re-oxygenated in the process and pumped back out through the meters where nutrients and fresh water are added as needed before travelling back to the greenhouses again.

"In this system, nothing is wasted and nothing except tomatoes leaves the green-

house," says Mastronardi. "After completing the Environmental Farm Plan, it was easy to decide what kind of hydroponic system I wanted to invest in. The plan has given me added confidence that we're doing a good job and not causing any problems."

With the hydroponic system, they no longer need to fumigate soils. And they need not worry about nutrients from the tomatoes leaching into groundwater through the soil.

Church sets neighborhood hoeing

Marian Van Til

VANCOUVER — Part of the property of St. George's Anglican Church in Vancouver forms a large corner lot. Rather than keep the lot in grass the church has decided to put it to better use — as a community garden, reports *Christian Info News*.

The neighborhood around the church is densely populated and St. George's is hoping that the garden will not only help out the neighbors, but get them in touch with creation as well. There are 24 garden plots, each of which were quickly snapped up by residents in a neighborhood draw on April 13.

St. George's rector Rev. Cathy Campbell feels that "growing food together can be a wonderful community-building experience." (Campbell worked in community nutrition before becoming ordained.) Unfortunately, this could be a one-time experience for the neighborhood gardeners. The church will be razed next year to make way for an innovative housing development which will integrate disabled and able-bodied residents.

B.C. youth grow trees, self-esteem

WINNIPEG (MCC) — Six young people in B.C.'s Fraser Valley had a chance to grow trees and self-esteem earlier this spring through a Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) B.C. job creation program.

The program, which is co-ordinated by Tim Neufeld of MCC B.C., involved youth planting 100,000 trees in the Valley. According to Neufeld, they learned job skills, perseverance, determination and responsibility.

The program was supported financially by two organizations with two different mandates, Tree Plan Canada and Youth

Services Canada. MCC B.C., as a sponsor, played a co-ordinating role by bringing the two mandates together.

"The use of environmental activity to train youth is an effective vehicle to get kids excited about learning and working," Neufeld says, adding that participants in last year's program had an 80 per cent success rate in finding employment.

Many of the youth who joined the program were discouraged about finding work. Some are considered "at risk." Neufeld found it challenging and rewarding to help them not only

develop new skills, but also to change their attitudes by instilling a sense of team work. He says it was great to see kids change from being complainers when they first joined the program to encouraging one another.

Even if they don't end up planting trees for a living, the program taught the youth perseverance to help them to go after jobs they really want. Neufeld says it was very satisfying "to see changes in the youth, like them taking initiative. These are some of the most valuable traits (the program has to offer)."

Neufeld also speaks passionately about the benefits trees contribute to the environment. Trees are "nature's air purifiers" as he calls them. The Fraser Valley has lost many of its trees, first to logging and more recently to agriculture and urban development. This loss of trees has been a contributing factor to the loss of air quality in the valley. In addition to purifying the air, trees also provide habitat to birds and small animals as well as controlling erosion of soil into streams and rivers habitat to the rich fishery in the area.

The program wrapped up in the first week in May with a graduation and partner appreciation night.

Dry cleaning gets competition from water

CC Staff

TORONTO — Dry cleaning with perchlorethylene works. It avoids shrinkage and gets clothes clean. But it also takes the environment to the cleaners. Enter "wet cleaning." No, it's not the old-wash-tub-and-hands method, but it mimics washing by hand through microprocessors that use water.

Environment Canada's Pollution and Prevention and Abatement Division is partially funding the expensive machines needed for the process in order "to demonstrate the technique and provide sites as examples to other cleaners," reports the *Globe and Mail*.

While this computer-controlled water method is becoming common in Europe, there are just six sites in Ontario now using wet cleaning method.

Baking soda an effective, friendly spring cleaner

OTTAWA (NC) — Spring is a time when the winter build up is washed away in anticipation of the warmer days ahead. With your spring cleaning underway, there are ways you can clean your home and yard and still be friendly to the environment.

For example, baking soda makes a great cleanser for your kitchen and bathroom and many other areas in and around your home. It's environmentally friendly to our lakes and water systems. Consider the following when spring cleaning:

* To clean you bathroom tiles, rinse the tiles and sprinkle baking soda directly on tile or onto a damp sponge. Wipe thoroughly and then rinse.

* Your patio furniture will look like new with a little baking soda and water. Dissolve

1/4 cup (50 mL) of baking soda in four litres of warm water and clean with a sponge or brush and rinse. Remember, washing soda may discolor aluminum, so don't use on areas where discoloration is a concern.

* Bring new life to your walls and painted woodwork: 50 mL of baking soda and four litres of water make a great cleaner for your banisters and for the areas around light switches. Use a stronger solution for heavily soiled areas.

* Baking soda will even tackle your garage floor. Sprinkle a generous amount over the grease on the floor and sprinkle with water to form a paste. Leave overnight and scrub with a damp brush. Rinse the area with water and your garage floor will be clean again.

Film review

Dutch Oscar winner an enigmatic character study

Marian Van Til

Antonia's Line

Stars Willeke van Ammelrooy, Els Dottermans, Veerle van Overloop, Jan Decleir, Marina de Graaf, Mil Seghers.

Written and directed by Marleen Gorris.

For two reasons I had a particular interest in reviewing *Antonia's Line*: it won this year's Oscar for best foreign-language film, and it's a Dutch film.

The fact that its writer/director and stars are Dutch does inform the film. It has a distinctively Dutch sturdiness about it, its rural characters are earthy and straightforward, and it exudes the kind of nothing's-a-big-deal, live-and-let-live attitude for which the modern liberal Netherlands is known to the world. It contains an additional element not always associated with the Dutch: humor.

After many years away, the widowed Antonia returns to her rural Catholic village with her teenage daughter, Danielle. Their country has just been liberated from the Nazis. (Though the narration and dialogue are in Dutch with English subtitles, the Netherlands isn't specifically mentioned, and, in fact, the movie was filmed in Belgium.)

A peculiar lot

Gradually the women get acquainted and reacquainted with the villagers, who are a rather peculiar lot.

There's the widowed Farmer Bas, who, with his five young sons, is still an outsider because he has lived there only 20 years.

There's Crooked Fingers, a nihilist intellectual who has given up on this "miserable" life and never steps out of his hovel; not incidentally, he becomes a dear friend to Antonia and her progeny.

There are the church's two priests: the older preaches against sin while greedily indulging in it himself; the younger leaves the church because he is "in love with life and the church is too in love with death."

There's the gangly, border-

line retarded man called Loopy Lips, abused by the farmer he works for. He's the butt of the boys' jokes until Antonia gives them their comeuppance and Loopy decides his lot lies with her.

There's DeeDee, also mentally slow, who is raped by her particularly sadistic brother Pitte and rescued by Danielle. There's the Mad Madonna, a spinster

less grounded than Antonia is.

Antonia is an enigma. There's something which roots her life and she seems to know what she believes. But it's definitely *not* what the church has taught her to believe. In fact, she thinks what the church teaches is pretty much bunk, yet she keeps going to church year after year. And so does everybody else, except Crooked Fingers.



Veerle van Overloop as Therese

who howls at the full moon. In the apartment directly below her lives the Protestant (the only one in town?), who is quietly besotted with the Mad Madonna. We're told she feels the same about him, but their dogma keeps them apart. (When both have finally died of broken hearts, the villagers figure dogma need no longer divide: the two are buried together, their tombstone containing the rather poignant message that they didn't share bread — meaning Communion as well as eating together — they didn't share a bed, but they'll forever share a grave.)

There's Letta — unwed and pregnant when Antonia and Danielle meet her — who feels physical and mental well-being only when she's pregnant.

Then there's Antonia's line: Danielle, Danielle's daughter Therese, and Therese's daughter Sarah.

Antonia is a strong, compassionate, likeable woman. Danielle and Therese are less appealing, largely because they are

Antonia accepts those whom others ignore — DeeDee and Loopy Lips; Crooked Fingers; Letta; the ex-priest; Farmer Bas. That acceptance extends to whatever sexual and/or love relationships her family and friends want to engage in, heterosexual or not, married or not. (Only DeeDee and Loopy Lips actually get married. Is this a subtle "joke" on the part of writer/director Marleen Gorris? Do only simpletons or the intellectually unsophisticated still get married?)

No judgment

Gorris' viewpoint is amoral, especially when it comes to sexuality. She is uncompromising in having Antonia refrain from passing moral judgment on the kind of sexual behavior Christians would consider immoral. Anything's OK as long as you aren't hypocritical (like the priest) and don't hurt someone else (like Pitte). But what of the hypocrisy of Antonia, Danielle and many of the others who continue to go to church when they

don't believe?

There's something peculiar about this film's philosophy. Antonia and her progeny reject the heart of Christian faith and Crooked Fingers' nihilistic views seem to be embraced. And in a twist that stands conventional wisdom, if not Christianity, on its head, several times Antonia talks of "the miracle of death," and she embraces death by deciding that she will die on a particular day. Yet there's little cynicism evident and the overall mood is one of buoyancy; the film has a slightly irreverent, tongue-in-cheek feel.

These characters love life, no matter how crazy and meaningless they purport it to be. When Sarah asks her great-grandmother whether Crooked Fingers is in heaven after he has died, Antonia says matter-of-

factly, "We dance only one dance" — and then we're gone. Yet it is a dance, not a dirge.

Sticks with you

Antonia's Line is beautifully made — the camera is like a nosy villager who sees everything from just the right vantage point. The acting, too, is exceptional. Willeke van Ammelrooy (Antonia) is one of the Netherlands' best actors, and we see why.

This paradoxical film sticks with you, for good and bad. It is both enjoyable and off-putting (some will find it offensive); an exceptional character study and a slightly loopy story of small significance. But its contradictions provide fodder for thought and discussion — as good films do.

Report says TV no longer has 'family hour'

ALEXANDRIA, Va. (EP) — Prime time TV used to have a "family hour" during which programs like *Little House on the Prairie* and *The Cosby Show* aired. Those days are gone, says the Media Research Center. A just-released MRC study of four weeks of U.S. prime time programming in September and October 1995 reveals that the first hour of prime time is mostly sitcoms which make frequent use of vulgarity and sexual portrayals.

The worst programs in terms of use of vulgarity were NBC's "Mad About You," and *JAG*. When it comes to sex, all four major U.S. networks were neck

and neck, so to speak. In all the prime time programs studied, pre-marital or extra-marital sex outnumbered portrayals of sex within marriage by an eight to one ratio, and was almost always condoned.

The study noted that in attempting to appeal to young adults the networks have left both children and their parents underserved. The report urges all networks to voluntarily provide the viewing public with the across-the-board haven it once counted on, and to broadcast in the first hour of prime time only shows that parents and children can watch together.

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Church

Jews for Jesus founder steps down

SAN FRANCISCO, Calif. (EP) — Moishe Rosen, founder of Jews for Jesus, is stepping aside 23 years after founding the Christian evangelistic outreach to Jews.

"I am convinced that we need a younger, more energetic approach," said Rosen, 64. "I am eager to see Jews for Jesus remain on the cutting edge of evangelism. The new leader will be able to leap even further into the great future God has for this ministry." Rosen will remain on staff with the organization, and will speak, write, advise, travel and serve as needed. He has not chosen a successor and will not be involved in the process of

selecting one. "The next executive director will be God's choice," he said. "I want to see God's choice confirmed like it was in Acts 15:28, which reads, 'It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us.' Jews for Jesus' board of directors will select a new executive director from among the ministry's current missionaries.

Rosen had a lifetime contract as executive director of the organization, but decided to provide an opportunity for younger leadership. "What has made Jews for Jesus the largest and most respected mission of its type," he said, "has been our readiness to move and go and

change when God says to move, go or change."

Rosen was raised in an Orthodox Jewish family in Denver, Colo. At 21, he accepted Jesus Christ as his Messiah. In 1957 Rosen was ordained to ministry. He served with the American Board of Missions to Jews in Los Angeles, New York and San Francisco before founding the

Jews for Jesus movement in 1970 in northern California. Three years later the missionary organization was formally created. It has since become the largest of its kind, with over 100 missionaries serving worldwide.

Music, drama, literature, advertisements in secular publications and on the Internet — all in a Jewish style — have been

used by Rosen and Jews for Jesus to communicate the gospel. "We've found it effective to express our faith in Y'shua in ways that are natural to us as Jews," explained Rosen. "Our message is no different than that of the rest of evangelical Christianity; it's just that the methods and manner reflect our Jewish culture and heritage."

Trinity Christian College names Presbyterian as new president

Marian Van Til, with files from TCC

PALOS HEIGHTS, Ill. — The trustees of Trinity Christian College have announced a unanimous decision to appoint as the college's next president Dr. A.J. Anglin, a "Reformed evangelical" who is a member of the United Presbyterian Church. Anglin will begin his duties on July 1.

Anglin is a native of Siloam Springs, Arkansas, and currently serves as provost at the 4,000-student Azusa Pacific University near Pasadena, California. He started his career as a chemistry professor at Taylor University in Upland, Indiana, and served in administrative positions at Taylor, Aurora and John Brown universities before coming to his present position in 1991.

Anglin says he is a Calvinist and that "my salvation and worldview are grounded in a Reformed Christian theology."

He believes the central challenge for any Christian college is "excellence while maintaining a firm commitment to the teachings and ministry of Christ."

Anglin's priorities for Trinity will be holding down tuition costs, encouraging support from alumni, foundations and friends, and equipping students with the "skills, knowledge, values, work habits and humble confidence" that will make them useful and

resilient in today's world.

Trinity was started by Christian Reformed Church members in the South Chicago area in 1959 and currently has 600 students. In the mid- and late-1960s Trinity attracted a large number of Canadian students because of "reformational" professors such as Calvin Seerveld, Marten Vrieze, Harry Cook, Harry Groenewold and others.

Ark of the Covenant still exists?

WASHINGTON, D.C. (EP) — Following in the footsteps of the fictional "Indiana Jones," an English archaeologist and architect believes he has discovered the location of the Old Testament's Ark of the Covenant. Leen Ritmeyer believes the ark is in a square-shaped niche cut into the boulders of Jerusalem's Temple Mount, now located in the Islamic Dome of the Rock. The ark was a wooden box covered in gold, and it contained the stone tablets Moses received on Mount Sinai upon which the Ten Commandments were inscribed. The ark disappeared following the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. The Dome of the Rock is a major sacred site for Islam, and Islamic authorities have prevented archaeological study of it.

These churches get 'raves'

HAMBURG, Germany (EP) — "This disco used to be a cute cathedral." That line from a Steve Taylor song has turned out to be eerily prescient for Germans. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in northern Germany began hosting "raves," which are all-night dance parties featuring techno-pop music. According to the German news ser-

vice IDEA, ancient churches are hosting the parties, which include some elements of preaching, such as a passage from the Old Testament being sung by a Gregorian choir.

"Many adolescents are obviously fed up with grand words," explained the Rev. Stefan Wolfschutz, who initiated the event. "They trust the music and their feelings." A description of the project explains, "Gregorian chants and techno, the mass and the party, are the foundation for a common sensitivity towards different cultures of music," and adds, "A new dialogue, a vision of the cathedral of the future, is developing."

Not everyone is excited about the new outreach — particularly since organizers insist their aim is not to evangelize the techno dancers. "The church must be open to everyone, but not to everything," said the Rev. Ulrich Russ, chair of a conservative church association. "Let us keep our sacred buildings." Russ got his wish; after the first party in mid-February in Hamburg a fierce debate erupted in the church community, leading to the cancellation of four other planned raves.

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Church

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Pentecostalism — not as a particular group of churches but as a broad movement — is the most influential revival wave in our times. Therefore we should pay attention to it and test it. What's good in the movement should bring gain to all, and what's bad in it should be pointed out by our teachers and preachers.

We must also take inventory: What do Reformed people know of the Spirit? Are there truths about the Holy Spirit that we have omitted in our confessions and that play no role in our lives?

A search of the three confessions of the Reformed churches yields some surprises. The *Belgic Confession* says little about the work of the Spirit. But it states the important belief that only by the inner testimony of the Spirit are we sure that the Bible is the Word of God (Art. 4).

The *Canons of Dort* contain less than one would expect which relates to the Spirit, especially in the section that deals with the perseverance of the saints. But the *Canons* have an awesome description of the Spirit's work in conversion and regeneration (III/IV, 11 and 12).

The *Heidelberg Catechism* strikes the right note at the beginning: When Christ has saved me, he, "by his Holy Spirit assures me of eternal life and makes me whole-heartedly willing and ready from now on to live for him" (A.1). The Spirit must "regenerate" sinners (A.8). He "creates" faith in me (A.21), and "anoints" us as he did Jesus (L.D.12). Especially Lord's Day 12's definition of a Christian as someone who has been appointed by God and anointed by the Holy Spirit to fulfill a calling, a threefold office, is an enormously important teaching for the identity of Christians in the Reformed tradition. Let's hope it is still preached and practised everywhere.

Not the whole story

In answer to the question "What do you believe concerning the Holy Spirit?" the catechism says clearly who the Spirit is and what the Spirit does: "He makes me share in Christ and all his blessings, comforts me and remains with me forever" (L.D.20). However, if we had to write this answer today, we would want to add at least four more things:

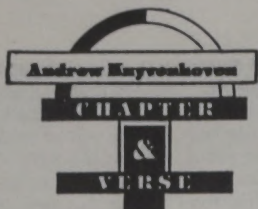
First, the coming of the Spirit (Pentecost) marks the beginning of a new age. The old divisions (Babel!) are done away and a new unity of all tongues and tribes is established in the Body of Christ.

Second, the Holy Spirit is Jesus's presence with us between Pentecost and the end of the age.

Third, the Holy Spirit is the "motor" of missions. The Spirit makes it possible for us to proclaim the Lordship of Jesus extensively — that is, worldwide, and intensively — that is in all of life's departments.

Fourth, the Spirit equips and empowers the church with *charismata*, gifts for each believer for the upbuilding of the church, the need of the world and the glory of God.

Fortunately, these four points are mentioned in the Christian Reformed Church's "Contemporary Testimony" (#30-33).



Andrew Kuyvenhoven is a retired Christian Reformed pastor who lives in Grand Rapids, Mich.

CRC general secretary accused of 'threats' to Dutch church synod

Marian Van Til

LUNTEREN, Neth. — The general secretary of the Christian Reformed Church in North America caused something of a stir at an April 23 synod session of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland).

Dr. David Engelhard addressed the Dutch synod as both CRC general secretary and as part of the CRC's standing Interchurch Relations Committee (IRC). The IRC was commissioned by last year's CRC synod to review the relationship between the two denominations and to continue dialogue about issues causing tension.

Synod 1995 had voted, only after a heated debate, to continue in "ecclesiastical fellowship" with the GKN; and this year's synod will face nine overtures asking for the suspending or breaking of ties with the Dutch church. Especially at issue is an ongoing disagreement over how to read Scripture, out of which has come, for example, the GKN's acceptance of homosexual relationships as normative.

Growing unrest

Engelhard spoke forthrightly about how the CRC perceives the GKN. He told CC, "I mentioned that since last year's [CRC] synod there's a growing unrest in the CRC about their view of homosexuality. I linked that to comments [made to the CRC synod] by their fraternal delegate."

That fraternal delegate was Rev. Richard Vissinga, who happened to be the president of the GKN synod which Engelhard was addressing. Vissinga shocked many CRC synod delegates when he said that "monogamous" homosexual relationships shouldn't be condemned, and then quoted from Gal. 3:28: "In Christ 'there is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female' — and I might add, hetero nor homo."

Engelhard's remarks to the Dutch synod were interpreted by the press and by a number of delegates to be a "threat" to break off relations with their church. That's what caused the stir. Says Engelhard, "They turned my indicative sentences about the state of affairs to a threat. The headlines tended to distort what I said."

Engelhard says he laid out the

current state of the situation and how it got that way. And while he admits he "didn't shy away from stating how things are," he wasn't sent with the mandate to issue an ultimatum.

Some took offense

Still, some Dutch delegates took offense. Some said his reference to their fraternal delegate (though not by name) was inappropriate, particularly since the man was now president of their synod. Others began to discuss the nature of ecclesiastical relations, concluding that admonition (or even implied admonition) from one church to another is inappropriate.

Still other Dutch delegates were in the CRC corner, however. "Some said, 'We need your relationship with us; you can give us stability,'" Engelhard noted.

Later, the general secretary and two IRC colleagues who accompanied him to the Netherlands (Henry Zwaanstra, church history professor at Calvin Seminary and John Hulst, retiring president of Dordt College) "discussed topics of concern to us," he says, with the GKN's Commission on Church and Theology, with its Commission on the Church and Israel (Vissinga had also questioned the need to evangelize Jews) and with the GKN's ecumenical deputies, who are equivalent to the IRC.

Still learning

The up-shot was that the IRC learned several important things which it will report to Synod 1996. They more fully understand the GKN's position on homosexuality. "They don't want to discuss homosexuality publicly because that might hurt their homosexual members," says Engelhard, though they are willing to discuss it in small groups and theological

commissions.

"They also told us that they no longer work with 'God met ons' (a document regarding biblical interpretation with which the CRC has had major disagreements) and that they've adopted the 'Hermeneutics and Ethics' statement which came out of the 1992 Athens REC (Reformed Ecumenical Council) assembly. That was news to us; I don't know why we didn't know that. But their adopting that may be a hopeful sign," Engelhard continued.

Distance of time

Engelhard admits that the issue of relations with the Dutch church is not high on the agenda of most CRC people, despite the overtures to Synod 1996 on the subject. Canadians tend to be closer to the situation because many still have ties in the Netherlands, but "a lot of people in the CRC" don't know much about it and see no need for continuing a relationship with a church in the Netherlands, he says.

Engelhard points out, too, that some who are calling for breaking the relationship "overlook that since 1983 it's been a severely restricted relationship: there's no automatic pulpit exchange, and GKN members who come to worship in our church cannot automatically take communion — or at least they're not supposed to be able to without being asked about their faith, their lives of holiness."

The IRC meets May 17 to discuss what kind of advice to give to synod. "We were appointed presupposing a relationship with the GKN," Engelhard says, "not to advise about breaking that relationship. We'll report to synod about our conversations and they'll have to decide whether our church should continue the relationship or not."

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Feature

Rufus remembers Pentecost

A meditation on Acts 2 and Romans 8

Brian J. Walsh

My name is Rufus. I know, I know, you know a lot of guys named Rufus, so I'll tell you which Rufus I am. I show up once in the Bible. You probably didn't notice, but at the end of that long letter that Paul wrote to the Christians in Rome, he sends greetings to a whole bunch of people. I'm in that list, with my mother: "Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord; and greet his mother — a mother to me also" (16:13). I know it's not much, but Paul was kind of close to Mom and me, so you can understand why that little verse is my favorite in all of Paul's writings.

But I'm not here just to name

My family attempted to spend as much time in Jerusalem as possible, especially if we could celebrate any of the holy feasts there. By doing that we could maintain some sense of connection with our people, our tradition and our God.

drop. Actually I want to tell you a story.

I am a Jewish Christian. And I live in perhaps the one place in the world that I would most *not* want to live in — Rome. I come from a rather well-educated family and we have, for some generations now, been involved in the Roman civil service. Being Jews, this has always been a source of deep embarrassment.

Along with any other Jews who could afford the journey, my family attempted to spend as much time in Jerusalem as possible, especially if we could celebrate any of the holy feasts there. At least by doing that we could maintain some sense of connection with our people, our tradition and our God.

So it was that some 25 years ago my family was in Jerusalem for a couple of months. We

managed to get there just in time for Passover. But the excitement of Passover that year was marred by the controversy surrounding Jesus of Nazareth, and it felt as if the whole celebration was desecrated by the shameful crucifixions on the eve of the feast.

My father arranged to extend our stay until the next holy festival, Pentecost — the harvest feast of first fruits, 50 days after Passover.

"Let's have a peaceful and joyful Pentecost," I remember my mom saying, "and then we'll return to Rome." And since things had been rather quiet since Passover, with no more Messiah claimants around, we figured that Mom would get her wish.

Well, it seems that we weren't yet done with this Jesus and his followers. They managed to cause quite the stir on Pentecost as well, a stir that would change the life of my family.

† † †

The day of Pentecost came and we were returning from the Temple in a throng of singing, happy pilgrims. When we weren't singing Hebrew songs together, people were all talking and shouting to one another, each in their own tongues. It was a virtual cacophony of noise. And while I kind of enjoyed the diversity of peoples it also made me just a little sad that here we were, all Jews, but most of us were much more conversant in our native languages of Latin, Greek, Persian, Egyptian, Parthian and others, than we were in our mother tongue of Hebrew. So it meant that while we all had a Jewish faith and heritage in common, really our dispersal at the hands of various empires had made us people who couldn't communicate with each other. It kind of made me think of the story of the Tower of Babel.

While we were jostling in the crowds, suddenly we heard a noise that cut through our cacophony.

I don't know how to explain

it. It was rather like a localized hurricane — sounding like an incredible rush of violent wind, maybe a block away. And that was followed by voices, dozens of voices, not totally unlike our own confusion of languages, yet with a difference.

As we pressed close to the house where all the commotion was it became clear that a group of people had come out of the house and were joyfully, even ecstatically, speaking to all of us. They were telling wonderful stories of God's transforming deeds of power, invariably connected to this very Jesus of Nazareth who had disrupted the Passover feast. And they were speaking all of the languages of the assembled pilgrims!

We could all understand; we could hear them in our native tongues. I knew both Greek and Latin, so I could tell that the stories being told in one language were the same as those being told in the other.

How can I describe my reaction? Back at Passover I was irritated and embarrassed about this Messiah and his motley crew. But now I stood amazed, with my mouth agape. However, some of the other folks present (I'm pretty sure they were locals), sneered, "No big deal; these silly Galileans have been into the wine a little early today. They're drunk!"

At this point one of them (I since discovered that this was Peter) spoke out to all of us. He began by saying that not even Galileans get drunk this early in the morning (to uproarious laughter from the crowd). He then quoted to us the prophet Joel, and went on to talk about Jesus of Nazareth as the true Messiah whom God had raised from the dead.

It was quite a speech. But what really struck me was the citation from Joel. The prophet spoke of the last days when God would once again pour out the Spirit on all flesh. Joel said that both sons and daughters would prophesy, young men would see visions, old men would dream dreams, and that the Spirit would be poured out even on the slaves so that they too would prophesy.

This talk of prophecy, visions

and dreams both excited me and made me uncomfortable. Such things were rare, if not extinct, in our time. And I was excited that young men would have a place in this outpouring of the Spirit, for I was at that time a much younger man than I am today. But I was shocked by this language of daughters and slaves also having a role in this outpouring. If God's Spirit were to anoint both men and women, free and slave, in the same way..., well, it didn't take too much imagination to realize that the whole social order would be turned on its head.

But that problem still seemed a little far removed for me. These social transformations would only occur if the

It was rather like a localized hurricane — sounding like an incredible rush of violent wind. And that was followed by voices, dozens of voices, not totally unlike our own confusion of languages, yet with a difference.

prophecy were true. And that is what had my mind spinning and my heart racing. Could I believe this word? Indeed, could I believe that the Spirit had been poured out in such a way that there would once again even be prophecy, visions and dreams?

You see, as far as I could tell, there hadn't been any bone fide prophecy for generations. If there had been real prophecy then maybe we would have known what God was up to with allowing this dispersal of our people, this continued exile in our own land under the rule of the Roman occupiers.

If there had been prophecy, we would have known the truth about our calling in this situation and not be torn apart by all of the competing claims and alternative paths that were on offer from the Pharisees, Sadducees, collaborators,

revolutionaries and ascetics.

And what about visions? Well, yes, there were a few crazy apocalyptic visionaries here and there. All of their visions, however, were of a return from our exile, a being set free to serve our God in our own land. But our reality constantly undermined these visions. There was no return, there was no renewal of our nation, no coming together in a sense of covenantal harmony. And so I wasn't sure about visions anymore. They all seemed like pipe dreams, covering up the cruel reality of our lives.

It isn't surprising that I wasn't a man of many dreams. Like my father, and his father before him, we were survivors — pragmatists. When your bread is buttered by Roman overlords, you can't take the risk of dreaming. And if you do, by chance, have a dream about a better life, an experience of liberation, you quickly suppress it. Such dreams are too subversive, too dangerous. It is better not to dream — maintain the status quo.

Here, on this Pentecost morning Peter proclaimed that Joel's prophecy was being fulfilled. And it scared me — maybe because it might be true. His evidence was powerful. Here before my very eyes, in my very hearing, I saw a vision, heard a prophecy; and an ability to dream anew was born in me. I heard the story of God's redemption of Israel in the death and resurrection of Jesus, and I saw people from all over the world hear and understand that story in their own languages.

It was almost as if the curse of Babel was being lifted. It was almost as if we were experiencing, right here, still under the suspicious eye of Rome, a return from exile, a restoration to what it meant to be God's covenantal people. And if such a return was really happening then maybe I could allow myself to begin to dream again of the restoration of this broken and sin-torn creation — even if such dreams made me all the more uncomfortable with the numbing normalcy of the status quo.

Things happened pretty quickly that day. By the time Peter was finished speaking my



The Descent of the Spirit — a drawing on wood with pencil and brush by Gustave Dore from La Saint Bible (first published in 1865)

mother was entranced by this new gospel. Dad..., well, he remained a pragmatist. This prophecy, visions and dreaming stuff was not for him. Maybe he could see how unsettling all of this would be to the way life worked for him.

But I was with Mom on this one. The stories of Jesus rang true to me, too true to ignore or deny. I so much wanted to experience this outpouring of the Spirit to enliven and transform

what I knew was a comfortable but compromised life. I wanted to live with the truth of prophetic discernment of my times, to receive visions of God's ultimate victory over the powers of evil, and to dream dreams of the restoration of this world into the Kingdom of God.

So Mother and I, with two of our slaves, turned that day to follow Jesus. Before returning to Rome with Father, we were baptized and spent the next days

with Peter and the others, learning more about Jesus and breaking bread together.



A lot has happened in the 25 years since then. The gospel of Jesus has gone all over the world. Thousands have joined his flock. My dad died a

couple of years ago, still an unbeliever. Mom and I — with Dad's quiet acceptance, if not his full blessing — became deeply involved in the life of the young church here in Rome. And we became especially close, through our travels, with the Apostle Paul.

Things haven't been easy for the church, you know. We are constantly under suspicion, and many of our number have been persecuted, even killed for their faith. The excitement that I experienced that Pentecost so long ago has been tempered by all of this. And sometimes I doubt. If the Spirit has been poured out on us, then why do we continue to suffer so?

Well that brings me back to Paul. You see, he wrote our church a letter just a little while ago — that was the letter in which he said to send greetings to my Mom and me. And in that letter he talks about this problem of suffering. You might remember that bit, since it comprises some of his more memorable writings.

It is quite amazing what he says. He likens the creation to a woman groaning with labor pains. Though the creation itself — the birds, insects, trees, mountains, streams, animals, sea — receives its very life and daily renewal from the Spirit of God, it also experiences the same sense of brokenness, oppression and exile as we do. And so it longs, as we do, for new life — the creation longs to be reborn.

It is almost as if the creation has been dreaming these dreams of restoration and is impatient with the present, longing for the future. And in this impatience, in this waiting for new birth, the creation groans.

But Paul goes on to say that, in solidarity with the rest of creation, we also groan as we await our "adoption as full children of God," the redemption of our very bodiliness in the resurrection. And this groaning, he says, is precisely the evidence that we have the first fruits of the Spirit. Remember that Pentecost is the festival of first fruits. Well, the first fruit of the Spirit is to suffer, to groan in longing of pain, waiting and

looking for the fulfillment of the dangerous dream of restoration.

And then Paul goes a step further. Why do we groan in solidarity with all of creation, and why is this seen as the first fruit of the Spirit? Because the Spirit itself, in solidarity with creation and with humankind, groans in travail. It too is suffering the birth pangs of the new creation. It too utters wordless groans. And, the very God who

The outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost gave prophetic discernment, vision and dreams to a people tempted to give up on truth, lost without a vision and too frightened to dream anymore.



sent the Spirit to utter words of redemption on that Pentecost day some years ago — words that could be understood by all assembled — understands the Spirit when it has nothing to say, when it can only groan.

I guess that brings my story full circle. On the one hand the outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost gave prophetic discernment, vision and dreams to a people tempted to give up on truth, lost without a vision and too frightened to dream anymore. It gave us tongues to speak and ears to hear. On the other hand, this very same Spirit has made all of creation impatient with brokenness, giving voice not to articulate speech, but to wordless groans.

And whether I speak prophecy, see visions, dream dreams, or groan as a woman in labor, I know that it is the Spirit who is bearing fruit in my life, and indeed, in the life of all creation.

Brian Walsh is Christian Reformed chaplain at the University of Toronto.

Feature

Vanier spreads the good news of a common humanity

Gordon Legge

Jean Vanier, 67, has made it his vocation to be in relationship with other people. As such, he has become an authority on the human condition.

Today, Vanier functions as an ambassador-at-large for l'Arche, the community he founded for people with disabilities. From that single community established in 1964, 103 communities have sprung up worldwide.

Early in his life, Vanier was a naval officer. Then he was educated as a philosopher and theologian. Now he is a model of informality, most often dressed in a T-shirt, checked shirt, sweater, windbreaker and casual cords. His tall, commanding presence is contradicted by a stoop, an open smile, a sincere directness, a flurry of gestures and a manner that speaks of humility and vulnerability.

A need for community

"The real problem in our world is a new and incredibly deep form of insecurity," says Vanier. He made that observation while in Calgary recently for a meeting of l'Arche's international council.

The old certitudes of the past have broken down. A host of factors — ecological uncertainty, growing unemployment, global economic shifts, the influence of the modern media, to name a few — have contributed to the insecurity. The result: a disintegrating world with more and more anarchy, or a world in which groups close in on themselves for self-protection.

The task facing humanity, then, is "to find hope, to break out of our ethnic, cultural and religious groups to meet the stranger, to discover our common humanity and work for peace together." Doing that means entering into community.

Critics fear community because they view it as being closed, like sects in which individual conscience and freedom are sacrificed on the altar of power and togetherness. But real community, asserts Vanier, is a place of belonging, a place of caring. It operates to free the human spirit and promote individual growth. It is open to others.

This is where the l'Arche federation of communities offers its 32-year history to the world.

l'Arche is intentionally centred on the weak. It is constructed out of pain, says Vanier. Its members are people who have been rejected, who require a new type of family, a sense of belonging. Furthermore, it's built on faith — "a consciousness that God loves people, that he loves individual people. And that we're called to grow in faith and belief in a loving God."

grow into everything God intends them to be. That's accomplished by what Vanier calls "accompaniment," a French word that has no exact equivalent in English. It means walking with someone with compassion, giving them support, fostering personal growth.

"We are in a world that has, in a way, lost the notion of growth, and replaced it with a notion of

themselves. They can appreciate the body of another but they can't appreciate the person behind the sexuality."

How will our culture, which values independence over intimacy, find community? It will "re-find" community, says Vanier, because of the breakdown of the family and the appalling loneliness in so many hearts.

"We see the loss that comes from being married, the loss of one's independence, the loss of doing what you want," he says. "I don't think we've seen the gain... because we're not conscious of what it means to grow to maturity, to discover what it means to grow to responsibility." It means taking one's place in society, taking responsibility for spouse and children, for community, for the environment, for eradicating injustices.

"We've lost the notion of growth towards maturity because we don't know what maturity is. Maturity is the acceptance of responsibility, of difference. It's compassion, understanding people and, in a general way, co-operating with others to create a society in which there's a bit more love, that's a bit more human," says Vanier.

Recognizing the presence of God

To accomplish that, humanity must recover its sense of power and presence of God in people's lives. How?

"God knows," Vanier laughs. Then he adds, "In a way, I see it happening all over the place. I see a real search for God, for prayer. Ethics have fallen down but there is a rise in the yearning for spirituality and knowledge of God. We're at an exciting period of humanity when the cultural barriers have dropped, when elements of elitism don't exist (they can, and risk rising again); we are recognizing our common humanity."

Vanier continues, "In doing that, we're recognizing something very deep in ourselves, and in [doing that] maybe we'll recognize the presence of God in us all and then work towards that. How that will come about I don't know. It will come about if there are sufficient numbers of witnesses."

For many, those witnesses are often the poor, the marginalized,

the people with disabilities.

Vanier talks about how Antonio, 26, who lived in a hospital for 20 years, has transformed lives in his community. Antonio can't speak, relies on oxygen, has no use of his arms or legs, is fed through his stomach. He's totally dependent in every way. "But an incredible beauty shines in his eyes and face," says Vanier. "When you call him by his name, his eyes shine. In him, there is no anger or depression in his weakness. He's just a very loving, gentle person. He's like a child who touches people's heart."

Observes Vanier: Those who are most rejected, most wounded, give the most life. "As soon as you touch their common humanity, it obliges us to break down our prejudices, to meet people on the level of the heart... to meet people in communion." By becoming a friend of the poor, people touch their own poverty, their own incapacity to relate. The masks come down. They enter another world. "You discover the good news of our common humanity."

Deep within each person is a cry to discover that common humanity. When people discover it, it's like a wedding feast, a place of peace, wholeness, reconciliation and mutual acceptance. Fear disappears. Love blossoms.

Finding God in the mud

Wherever Vanier goes, "announcing l'Arche," as he puts it, people respond. For him, that's a sign that it's true, and it has a liberating effect.

"Whether you're in l'Arche or outside of l'Arche, what's important is whether you become fully a human being, that you reach maturity so that you can give life to other people."

Unfortunately, Vanier sees a lot of people living in television land, a place of dreams and illusions, or in an intellectual construct of theories and ideologies. "They are out of touch with reality, with people, with their own reality, with flesh."

He concludes, "I often say we have to re-find, not the God hidden in the heavens, but the God hidden in the mud, in the reality of pain, because our world is a very painful world, and we need to discover there the face of God."



Jean Vanier

Even though Vanier is Catholic, l'Arche communities are universal, based on common humanity. In India, for example, Hindus, Muslims and Christians share their lives together. Wealthy Brahmins live with Untouchables.

They're not seeking to foster a synthesis of religions. Rather, they encourage members to deepen their faith by discovering what is most important and essential in their own religion. "We try to break down barriers between people and discover their common humanity, where the strong help the weak, and the weak help the strong, where we're all in it together," says Vanier.

Growth is human reality

It is in that kind of community in which people rise up, in which they are nourished and

professional formation and success," he says. But growth is a human reality from the moment we're conceived until we die. And there's growth towards maturity, wisdom, loving people. It's a long, slow process.

"In order to grow you need good soil," says Vanier. "For me, earth is community. We need to be planted in it, and we need water and sunshine."

That entails a movement towards maturity, a quality this culture knows little about. Instead, it demands instant everything. It's "a Nescafé civilization," says Vanier.

"You see this very particularly with all the questions of precocious sexuality, the sexuality of young people. Because they are not interiorly mature, they don't know how to give themselves. They can give their bodies but they don't know how to give

MAY 24, 1996

Story

Driving lessons

Peter Gruner

"Eleven, 12, 13..." This was the fourth recount and I was still missing two campers. I scanned the area again.

While I was counting, I realized one of the missing guys was Alan. Of course.



"I had expected a nice, cushy job at the hospital, earning big bucks. Instead, I was a camp counsellor for the mentally challenged, earning minimum wage."

I hated this stupid job. And I was going to be in a heap of trouble if I didn't find them. I was here courtesy of my dad. I had expected a nice, cushy job at the hospital, earning big bucks. Instead, I was a camp counsellor for the mentally challenged, earning minimum wage.

I was in charge of the big boys, which was pretty cool. Except a few of them were older than me. Physically, anyway. But I bossed them around and they listened.

This was our first field trip. A pretty lame field trip. But I didn't want it to be our last one.

"You're going to be taking the boys fishing," Jane had said that morning.

"Fishing? Where?"

"One of the directors has a cottage just north of here."

"But we don't have fishing rods or anything."

"He's going to supply everything. Fishing rods, bait and lunch."

When we piled onto the bus I was optimistic. We'd been cooped up at the school for weeks. Robert Smith's was a day camp for the mentally challenged and I hadn't expected

trickle of water. Grafton bounced up and down, oblivious to the "rod" in his hand. Where was Michael? He had to be the other missing camper.

"Alan and Michael are missing," I said, running up to Mark.

"Michael Yee? What would he be doing with Alan?"

I shrugged. Michael Yee was mentally challenged, but he was a lot quieter than the rest of my campers. He was tall and wraith-like. Michael looked pretty fragile and always moved in slow motion. He had a permanent smile grafted to his face.

Alan, on the other hand, was sturdy and very vocal. Only I couldn't understand a thing he said. He had Down's Syndrome and the most enormous tongue I have ever seen. It was so big that he had to consciously work to keep it in his mouth. Most of the time, it peeked out lazily through his lips.

"Mark, you keep an eye on the rest of them. I'll go check around back to see if I can find them."

"Hurry up. We'll have to get on the bus in a few minutes."



I ran around the house, but no one was there. Alan and Michael had obviously found something more interesting than fishing. But what? And more importantly, where?

The clearing popped into mind. We had eaten lunch there a couple of hours ago. The water ran in front of the house, and the lawn surrounding the property was pretty big. Trees ringed the land but there was a trail that led to the clearing.

Barbecues had been set up in the clearing and it was accessible from the road. In fact, Mr. Ricci and his brother had driven to the clearing and parked their car on the grass. That's how they brought the burgers and hot dogs over.

I started running. If Alan and Michael had reached the clearing, they could go anywhere. Images of potential headlines flashed before me: "Two Campers Go Missing North of Toronto" or "Inexperienced Counsellor Loses Two Charges." My dad would not be pleased.

I had to watch these guys all the time. It's crazy that there were only two counsellors for this many campers. Alan needed a counsellor just to himself.

As I got to the clearing I saw them. They were getting into Mr. Ricci's car. I grinned. They wouldn't be going far.

I strode over to the car. Alan was in the passenger seat and Michael was in the driver's seat. They saw me approaching and locked their doors, waving and smiling at me.

Then I saw the keys in the ignition. Mr. Ricci had left his keys in the car!

"Hey, you guys. Time to get out. We have to go back to the bus."

Michael waved in slow motion and put his hands on the keys. "Alan, open this door right now!" I barked. Alan looked at me and spread his tongue on the window like a giant pink slug.

The ignition turned. Michael wasn't turning it far enough, but he was getting there.

I ran to Michael's door and banged on the window. "Michael, get out of the car right now." He gave me a slow, toothy grin. When he reached for the keys again, I became frantic. Banging on the car, gesturing wildly, I must have looked like a madman.

Alan and Michael were fascinated by the show I was putting on for them. Whenever I relaxed, Michael would reach for the keys.

Finally, I started pleading with them. Begging either one of the two to open their door. If only someone would come. Where was Mr. Ricci? He should have another key, shouldn't he?

Then it happened. Michael turned the key far enough and the engine started. The image of Michael and Alan driving throughout the country with me running after them filled me with dread.

Michael stepped on the gas and the engine roared. He slowly turned towards the stick shift. Desperately, I banged on the doors and pulled at the handles. "Open up! Open up this minute!"

The engine roared again and Michael's hand was on the stick shift. He was smiling at me. Alan was waving happily. There was nothing I could do. The

image of me chasing after them for eternity came back to mind.



Suddenly the need for a different strategy presented itself to me. I quickly pasted a smile on my face.

"Hey! That looks like fun. Can I come with you guys?" Alan bobbed his head up and down and unlocked his door. His fingers were still on the lock when I jerked open the door and dove into the car. I had the keys out of the ignition in an instant.

The smiles slid off Michael and Alan's face as they realized that we weren't going anywhere. I was so relieved that I needed a second to get my composure. Alan squirmed under my weight.

I got out of the car and told them to do the same. Alan looked at me, betrayed.

Mr. Ricci ran up to us as we were getting out of the car. "Oh no! The keys! Thank goodness you got them in time. Thank goodness." He hugged both Alan and Michael. Then he shook my hand in both of his. "What was I thinking, leaving the keys there? Stupid! Thank you, son."

I had been ready to tell him off for being irresponsible. But he was so visibly relieved. He didn't blame Alan and Michael. He blamed himself. And rightly so. Except...

If I had been watching them they never would have made it to the clearing. They might not have even wanted to, if I had been paying attention to them. I had spent most of my time being gruff and grumpy with the campers. And even so, Alan and Michael were willing to take me along with them on their "trip."

I told Mr. Ricci that it was all right and handed back his keys. It was my fault, I mumbled. We headed back towards the bus.

Alan and Michael were on either side of me and I put my arms around their shoulders. They looked up at me, smiling, already forgiving me for ruining their trip. "You know what?" I said, grinning back to them. "One of these days, we will go for a little road trip. But, I'll drive!"

Peter Gruner lives in Oakville, Ont., and does his writing on the GO commuter train before and after work.

Are Christians susceptible to evil spirits?

Dear P & M:

I am enclosing a newsletter from a Christian mental health organization because it contains a summary of a very disturbing speech. A speaker talked about demons and evil spirits; the reporter's coverage of this speech left the impression that these demons are able to pounce on people during their weakest moments. This goes contrary to my belief that Christians are safe from demon possession because the Spirit of God lives in us.

I was also disturbed by the speaker's apparent suggestion that abused people are especially susceptible to demonic attachments. This leaves those of us who have been abused with a horrible problem. How do we know if we are demon possessed? How do we know whether or not someone has

placed a curse on us? How can people with biochemical disorders defend themselves when they are often too ill to even take care of their most basic needs?

Please give your opinion on this subject and provide some relief and assurance of God's protection to those who suffer from mental illness or emotional problems.

Dear Fearing Demonic Attachments:

The newsletter you sent us contains two reports of an address given by a keynote speaker. That makes your letter a third-hand report of the original event. For this reason we are reluctant to critique what the speaker said since we are three steps removed from his actual presentation.



We can't question the speaker but we can respond to what was reported. The difficulty, however, is that our readers don't have access to the newsletter. We don't think it's fair to identify and criticize the organization's newsletter without doing them the justice of publishing it, and this column doesn't have the space. Therefore, our advice to you is to direct your concerns directly to the organization in question. They need to know that their choice of speaker and their apparent affirmation of his views was deeply disturbing to you.

However, we don't want to leave it at just that because you

do need to be reassured of God's constant presence and protection.

Spiritual warfare is one of the hottest topics in the evangelical world right now. Fueled by the novels of Frank Peretti and the theology of the fundamentalistic churches, North American Christians are making demons and curses the culprits for many of their ailments. Since Jesus obviously cast out demons and Paul wrote about the spiritual forces of darkness, no one dares to suggest that a growing number of Christians are indulging in a Christian version of the occult. The devil and his legions are to be taken seriously, but all this attention and fear is more due than they deserve!

Let's remember the basics:

God is sovereign. He is in control. He has control of our lives even when our lives seem to be out of control. This is our comfort when we are depressed, fatigued, or overwhelmed by present stress or past abuse. "If God is for us, who can be against us?" asks Paul. Look at Romans 8 and take comfort in the fact that "neither angels nor demons ... nor any powers ... will be able to separate us from the love of God."

Jesus is Lord. Through Jesus, God has won the battle. Through the Spirit he continues to stand up to a simpering Satan and a defeated darkness. This is our reassurance when we are weak, embattled and oppressed by physical or emotional pain. "The Spirit helps us in our weakness,"

says Paul. When we don't know what to pray for or even how to pray anymore, "the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express" (Rom. 7:26,27).

All this is captured in the Reformed doctrine of the Perseverance of the Saints which teaches us that "God's plan cannot be changed, his promise cannot fail, the calling according to his purpose cannot be revoked, the merit of Christ as well as his interceding and preserving cannot be nullified, and the sealing of the holy Spirit can neither be invalidated nor wiped out" (Canons of Dort).

Does Satan exist? Yes. Can Christians give him a foothold in their lives? Yes. But it doesn't help to live our lives furtively looking about for demons here and curses there, especially when life is already difficult enough.

You asked for our response to this subject. To those who see a demon behind every weakness we say: Stop blaming demonic forces. Start claiming God's sovereignty and Christ's lordship. And get on with the life God intends for you.

Write to: P & M, 16 Kilmount Drive, St. Catharines, ON L2N 5V6.

Peter and Marja Slofstra are a pastor and wife team living in St. Catharines, Ont. They are assisted by an advisory panel consisting of Herman de Jong, Bill Lulke, Alan Vandermaas, Marian Van Til and Bert Witvoet.

FROM COAST TO COAST

ENGLISH RADIO:

BRITISH COLUMBIA

DUNCAN-CKAY.....	10am	1500
Burns Lake-CFLD.....	9:15am	1400
Kitimat-CKTK.....	8:30am	1230
Osoyoos-CJOR.....	8:00 am	1490
Penticton-CKOR.....	8:00 am	800
Port Alberni-CJAV.....	7:00 pm	1240
Prince George-CIRX.....	7:00am	94.3
Princeton-CHOR.....	8:00 am	1400
Smithers-CFV.....	9:15am	1230
Summerland-CHOR.....	8:00 am	1450
Vancouver-CJVB.....	7:00 am	1470
Vancouver-(fm).....	7:00 am	103.3
Vernon-CJIB.....	9:30pm	940

ALBERTA

Brooks-CIBB.....	8:00am	1340
Edson-CJVR.....	10:00am	970
Ft. McMurray-CJOK.....	8:30 am	1230
High River-CHRB.....	8:30 pm	1280
St. Albert-CHMG.....	8:00 am	104.9

SASKATCHEWAN

Estevan-CJSL.....	8:00am	1280
Weyburn-CJSL.....	8:00am	1190

MANITOBA

Altona-CFAM.....	9:30am	950
Steinbach-CHSM.....	9:30am	1250
Winnipeg-CKJS.....	9:15am	810

ONTARIO

Atikokan-CFAK.....	9:30am	1240
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Chatham-CFCO.....	6:00 am	630
Fort Frances-CFOB.....	9:30 am	640
Guelph-CJOY.....	8:30am	1460
Hamilton-CHAM.....	7:30am	820
Kapuskasing-CKAP.....	9:00am	580
Kingston-WLKC.....	7:30 a.m.	100.7
Newmarket-CKDX.....	9:00 am	88.5
Oshawa-CKAR.....	8:00am	1350
Owen Sound-CFOS.....	10:30am	560
Pembroke-CHVR.....	10:00am	1350
St. Catharines-CKTB.....	7:30pm	610
Samia-CHOK.....	7:30am	1070
Stratford-CJCS.....	8:45am	1240
Windsor-CKLW.....	8:30am	580
Wingham-CKNX.....	10:30am	920
Woodstock-CKDK (fm).....	8:00am	102.3

NEW BRUNSWICK

Saint John-CHSJ.....	9:30am	700
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PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

Charlottetown-CFCY.....	7:00am	630
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QUEBEC

Montreal-CFQR (fm).....	7:30am	92.5
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NOVA SCOTIA

Digby-CKDY.....	6:00am	1420
Kentville-CKEN.....	8:30am	1490
Middleton-CKAD.....	8:30am	1350
New Glasgow-CKEC.....	7:30am	1320
Sydney-CJCB.....	8:00am	1270
Weymouth-CKDY.....	8:30am	103.1
Windsor-CFAB.....	8:30am	1450

FRENCH RADIO: Perspectives Réformées

ONTARIO

Cornwall-CFXX.....	9:30am	1170
Timmins-CRCL.....	9:30am	620

QUEBEC

Montreal-CHRS.....	8:00am	1090
Valleyfield-CFLV.....	8:45am	1370

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Ontario & Quebec.....	7:00 & 10:00pm
Nfld., N.B., N.S. & P.E.I.....	8:00 & 11:00pm

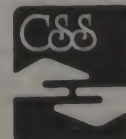


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Feature

Infatuation with feel-good entertainment keeps us from understanding our culture

Bill Van Dyk

In 1965, many of us (or our parents) went to see our first Hollywood film, and it was *The Sound of Music*, a glossy, somewhat saccharine musical about how the Von Trapp family escaped from Nazi-occupied Austria. People adored this film so much that it probably did more than anything else to move the Christian Reformed Church to repeal its prohibition against the "worldly amusement" of cinema.

Now, if you are truly convinced that *The Sound of Music* is movie-making at its finest, nothing I can possibly say in the following paragraphs will move you from that opinion. I acknowledge the film's technical merits. It is expensively filmed, beautifully staged, and the music is memorable and well-performed. Most people are aware of the conscious sentimentality, but don't mind.

Aryan purity

I've never liked *The Sound of Music* because I've always been uncomfortable with films that romanticize tragedy, and no tragedy was darker or more compelling than the rise and fall of the Third Reich. Five to six million Jews, gypsies and other undesirables were systematically exterminated by the Nazi regime. I do not deny that the Von Trapps had a story to tell, but Hollywood's version of their story is disconcerting. They are centre stage, in all their Aryan purity, in a film that barely acknowledges even the existence of the Jews. The world of the Von Trapps, white, rich Austrians, is pretty well the kind of world the Nazis envisioned, once they had carried out the final solution.

Consider the scene in which the father lines up the children with military precision, in perfect order from highest to smallest, to send them off to bed. Given the nature of Nazi Germany (and Austria), the Nazi's obsessions with secondary racial characteristics and genetic purity, and Hitler's passion for order and precision, this scene is either an obscene joke, or absolute mindless film-making, completely at odds with its own subject. It deplores the Nazis as enemies of this nice Austrian family, while simultaneously

inviting you to adore their physical grace, cleanliness, beauty, discipline and racial purity.

It has Dan Quayle's "family values" in spades. Nobody swears or runs around indecently dressed or commits adultery. The children are mindlessly obedient, the father is a powerful authority figure and Maria, the on-again, off-again nun, is both pious and mischievous — an irresistible combination to many of us. In short, this film should offend nobody.

and libertines. The dancers gyrate and wiggle their rear-ends as an evil-grinned emcee invites the audience to discard their inhibitions and forget all their problems. Characters cavort and carouse and explode into brawls.

The first contrast between these two productions, from Julie Andrews' convent to Sally Bowles' Kit Kat Club, is shocking. In fact, Sally Bowles, the central character of *Cabaret*, makes her first appearance dressed as a nun, singing about

belongs to me." The audience is enraptured by the strength and sense of purpose expressed in the song, particularly in contrast to the brazen physical obscenity of the previous scenes.

Highminded Nazis

A few scenes later, at a wedding, a similar group gathers to sing the same song. As they sing, a few Nazi arm-bands appear, then more, and more, until the entire chorus, stamping their feet and raising their arms in salute, have become a ferocious mob. Suddenly, the song is revealed for what, in fact, it has always been: a paean to Aryan purity and dominance. And a connection is drawn between the earlier "wholesome" ideal of beauty and racial purity, and the expansionist violence and viciousness of the Nazi regime.

One realizes — maybe for the first time — that the Nazis didn't recruit their members at gun point. They caught them in a web of high-minded visionary ideals and hopes and dreams, exploited the economic and moral collapse of post World War I Germany, and tapped into repressed but still potent nationalist instincts. *Cabaret* suggests that Nazism succeeded because it appealed to the same kind of emotions and ideas that most of us still share today.

Cabaret is not content with surfaces and pretty pictures. In fact, it draws a very unpretty picture of humanity to reveal the corruption within ourselves that could do it again. Sally Bowles is so immersed in her own decadent, impulsive lifestyle that she is blind to the consequences of the political changes going on around her. "What does politics have to do with us?" she asks. The real Sally Bowles, upon whom the original story by Christopher Isherwood was based, died in a concentration camp.

Cultural ignorance

The Christian community is frequently guilty of preferring bland entertainments like *The Sound of Music* to gutsy, authentic plays and films like *Cabaret*. Our community is notoriously fearful of the raw power of honest drama, strong language and images, and, sometimes, the power of truth. Is this a harmless matter of taste, or an important deficiency in Christian culture?

I have been thinking recently not only about the contrasts and comparisons between these films, but also about other incidents that resonate with these issues: a Christian Reformed Church sponsors a square dance; a Christian high school history teacher tells me he doesn't have a television set in his house because all it shows is trash; a Christian high school English teacher shakes his head slowly as I ask if he is familiar with recent work by Alice Munro, Timothy Findley, Michael Ondaatje, or Gunter Grass. A Christian high school is incapable of finding a meaningful play to perform because the teachers fear that parents will be offended. We speak thousands and thousands of words about the errors of our culture, but we make little effort to speak the same language.

Reduced to irrelevance?

The future of the world may not depend on whether we prefer to watch *The Sound of Music* or *Cabaret*. But sometimes we must ask ourselves if our infatuation with feel-good confections, inoffensive literature and music, and "wholesome family values" is teaching us what we need to know about the dynamics of our own history and culture. When we, as parents, object to our children reading or performing plays that are contemporary and meaningful, are we condemning ourselves to even greater irrelevance?

Does the world look for answers from people who object so strongly to the language of the streets that they never take the time to hear what the people of the streets are saying?



Maria (Julie Andrews) sings to the children in the 1965 movie version of *The Sound of Music*

A few years ago, I was involved in Theatre Kent's production of *Cabaret*. Theatre Kent is a community theatre group supported entirely by volunteers. (A movie version — which is not very similar to the stage version, but still interesting — was released in 1972 and is readily available in video stores.) *Cabaret*, like *The Sound of Music*, is about individuals who come into conflict with the rising tide of Nazism. Both of them want you to know how awful the Nazis were. But it is the contrasts of these two works that is most illuminating.


The most obvious contrast is in outward style. Many Christians would not be comfortable attending a performance of *Cabaret*. Much of the action takes place inside the Kit Kat Club, a cabaret where prostitutes and dancing girls mingle with drunken sailors, homosexuals

her mother thinking she is living in a convent in southern France instead of in a Berlin nightclub, "in a pair of lacy pants...." This is followed by a drunken brawl, the "Kit Kat girls" singing, stumbling, rolling over the floor on top of several bar patrons, and a song about picking someone up for casual sex, of various orientations.

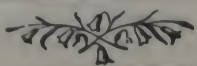
The audience is initially fascinated ... and repelled. So when a group of healthy wholesome-looking, well-dressed men, women and children come out into a "meadow" for a picnic and begin singing a charming German folk song, the audience's first reaction is relief: finally, some normal, decent-looking people! The actors in this scene actually resemble, physically, the Von Trapp family as presented in *The Sound of Music*! The song is about nature, optimism and faith: "Tomorrow

Bill Van Dyk is a computer consultant living in Kitchener, Ont.

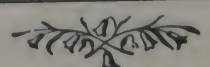
Classifieds

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<p>(Revised February 1, 1995)</p> <p>Births \$25.00</p> <p>Marriages & Engagements \$40.00</p> <p>Anniversaries \$45.00</p> <p>2-column anniversaries \$90.00</p> <p>Obituaries \$45.00</p> <p>Notes of thanks \$35.00</p> <p>Birthdays \$40.00</p> <p>All other one-column classified advertisements: \$15.00 per column inch. NOTE: Minimum fee is \$15.00. Letter under file number \$35.00 extra. Photos: \$25.00 additional charge.</p> <p>Note: All rates shown above are GST inclusive</p> <p>ATTENTION!</p> <p>a) <i>Christian Courier</i> reserves the right to print classifieds using our usual format.</p> <p>b) A sheet with information about an obituary sent by funeral homes is not acceptable since it leads to errors and confusion.</p> <p>c) Photographs sent by fax are not acceptable. If you wish a photo included, send us the original.</p> <p>d) <i>Christian Courier</i> will not be responsible for any errors due to handwritten or phoned-in advertisements.</p> <p>e) The rate shown above for classifieds covers any length up to five column inches. <i>Christian Courier</i> reserves the right to charge for additional column inches at the rate of \$15.00 per column inch (GST incl.).</p> <p>NEWLYWEDS & NEW PARENTS</p> <p>We offer a one-year subscription for only \$25.00 (GST incl.) to the couples whose wedding is announced in the <i>Christian Courier</i> and to the parents of the child whose birth announcement appears in our paper. To facilitate matters, we encourage those who request the wedding or birth announcement to enclose \$25.00 and the couple's correct address.</p> <p>Christian Courier 4-261 Martindale Rd. St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1 Phone: (905) 682-8311 Fax: (905) 682-8313</p>	<p>DROST/DEKOTER:</p> <p>With joy and thankfulness to God, Peter and Sharon Drost, and Larry and Willy DeKoter, announce the marriage of their children</p> <p>MARIETTA and RODNEY</p> <p>This special occasion will take place, the Lord willing, on Saturday, June 8, 1996, at 3:30 p.m., in London, Ont. We also congratulate Rod with his graduation on June 14, from the University of Western Ontario. He will be receiving his PhD in Immunology. Rod has accepted a position as a post doctoral research associate at the University of Chicago.</p>	<p>1956 June 8 1996</p> <p>"In all thy ways acknowledge Him and He will direct thy paths" (Prov. 3:6).</p> <p>With much joy and thankfulness to our Lord, we announce the 40th anniversary of our parents and grandparents</p> <p>RAY and SIEN KIELSTRA (nee HOOGSTRA)</p> <p>Congratulations Dad and Mom, Pake and Oma.</p> <p>With love from:</p> <p>Clare & Rose Kielstra — St. Thomas Raymond, Natalie, Timothy Janie & Jake Arends — Aylmer Joe, James, John, Jeffrey Peter & Judy Kielstra — St. Thomas David, Brian, Wendy</p> <p>Friends and family are invited to an open house on Saturday, June 8, 1996, from 2-4 p.m., at First Chr. Ref. Church, 320 Elm St., St. Thomas, Ont.</p> <p>Best wishes only.</p> <p>Home address: 230 Sunset Dr., St. Thomas, ON N5R 3C3</p>	<p>Simcoe Norwood 1971 May 29 1996</p> <p>With joy and thankfulness to God, we wish to announce the 25th wedding anniversary of our parents</p> <p>HANS and CATHY VINK (nee HOTCHKISS)</p> <p>Laura & Rick Babcock — Toronto, Ont. Robbie Janice — Norwood, Ont. Michelle — Peterborough, Ont. Taylor Derek — Norwood, Ont.</p> <p>All friends and relatives are cordially invited to help us celebrate this event at an open house in the Norwood Town Hall on Saturday, June 1, 1996 at 8 p.m.</p> <p>Best wishes only.</p> <p>Home address: R.R.#2, Norwood, ON K0L 2V0</p>	<p>Veenwouden Ancaster 1946 May 28 1996</p> <p>It is with happiness and thankfulness to the Lord that we celebrate the 50th wedding anniversary of our parents</p> <p>TED and FRANCES VIERSEN (nee TALMA)</p> <p>Roma & Peter Buwalda — Hamilton Sandi & Frank Buwalda — Hamilton Chip Viersen — Hamilton Maynard & Barb Viersen — Grand Rapids</p> <p>Ed & Karen Viersen — Ancaster and 15 grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.</p> <p>An open house will be held at the Old Ancaster Town Hall on Friday, May 31, 1996, at 7:30 p.m.</p> <p>Best wishes only.</p> <p>Home address: 601 Mohawk Road, Ancaster, ON L9G 2X1</p>	
	<p>Births</p>	<p>HANEMAAYER:</p> <p>With great joy and thankfulness to God, we as grandparents are sharing the joy of the birth of our first grandchild</p> <p>TERESA KATHLEEN</p> <p>bom on April 12, 1996, weighing 7 lbs, 9 oz.</p> <p>Happy parents are David and Kim Hanemaayer. Happy first-time grandparents are Bert and Agnes Hanemaayer and Stuart and Cathy Oosterhuis.</p>	 <p>Brockville</p> <p>1956 June 1 1996</p> <p>"Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in Him; and He shall bring it to pass" (Ps. 37:5).</p> <p>With joy and thanksgiving to God for His faithfulness to our parents</p> <p>MARTIN and WILMA VANDEN BERG (nee DESCHIFFART)</p> <p>we, their children, congratulate them on their 40th anniversary.</p> <p>Cathy & Barry DeJong — North Augusta, Ont. Jennifer & Andrew Dubbeldam — Oakville, Ont. Ralph & Jane Vanden Berg — Nepean, Ont. Evelina & Henry Oosterhof — North Augusta, Ont. Cynthia & Fred Dullemond — North Augusta, Ont. Andrea & Rob Vertesi — Hamilton, Ont.</p> <p>Hugs and kisses from your 14 grandchildren!</p> <p>Address: 423 Fernbank Ave., Elizabethtown, ON K6V 7C1</p>	<p>Hippolytushoef Dunnville 1946 June 7 1996</p> <p>"Happy is he whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the Lord his God" (Ps. 146:5).</p> <p>With thankfulness to God for His blessing, we hope to celebrate the 50th anniversary of our parents and grandparents</p> <p>ARTHUR and MINNIE VANDERVLIT (nee KINGMA)</p> <p>With love from the family:</p> <p>Mark & Eily — Renton Andy & Marion — Vineland Al & Rita — Dunnville John & Jennefer — Dunnville Janet & Ed Mazur — Dunnville Lawrence & Jane — Toronto Bonnie & Dick Baarda — Smithville Rey & Wendy — Smithville Henry — home</p> <p>and 27 grandchildren.</p> <p>Relatives and friends are invited to the open house at the Dunnville Chr. School, Heritage Hall, from 2-4:30 p.m., on Saturday, June 8, 1996.</p> <p>Home address: 419 Helena St., Dunnville, ON N1A 2T1</p>	<p>Obituaries</p>
	<p>Anniversaries</p>	<p>Hoogkerk, Gr. Dundas, Ont. 1946 May 20 1996</p> <p>50th wedding anniversary!</p> <p>With special joy and thanks to God, we have celebrated with our Dad and Mom,</p> <p>FRED and DOROTHY BOONSTRA</p> <p>We thank God for His faithfulness to you and for the love you share with us.</p> <p>With love from your children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren.</p> <p>Harriet & Ross James — Australia Matthew, Paul, Brendan Margaret & Joe DeWeerd — Waterdown Bryan & Geni (Trevor, Justin) Cynthia & Jeff, Wayne Wilma & Ed Gninghuis — Dundas Scott, Kimberley, Amy, Gwenn Kerry & Wilma Boonstra — Burlington Annette, Karen & Joe, Fred Jenny & Stan Jaskot — Ancaster Angela, Shauna, Mitchell Wally & Irene Boonstra — Waterdown John, Stephanie, Kristen Dorothy & Brian Trebych — Hamilton Gregory, Kevin</p> <p>Home address: 374 Sydenham Road, R.R. #2, Dundas, ON L9H 5E2</p>	<p>Personal</p>	<p>Personal</p>	<p>Obituaries</p> <p>Doom Grimsby the Neth. Ont.</p> <p>On May 9, 1996, the Lord called into glory his child</p> <p>WILLEM FREDERIK VEENHOF</p> <p>after a long and full life of 96 years. He was predeceased by his loving wife Adriana van Os (1991), and a great-grandson Benjamin Vijn (1989).</p> <p>Dear father of:</p> <p>Bill & Dorothy Veenhof — St. Catharines, Ont. Nic & Jane Veenhof — London, Ont. Janny & Jan Bijsterbosch — Zuidbroek, the Neth. Fred & Dinah Veenhof — New Hamburg, Ont. Toni & Jack Keefe — Corunna, Ont.</p> <p>Beloved Opa and Great-Opa of 19 grandchildren and 43 great-grandchildren.</p> <p>Brother of Adriaan Veenhof, the Netherlands.</p> <p>The funeral service was held on May 13, 1996, at the Maranatha Chr. Ref. Church of St. Catharines, Ont., Rev. Walter VanderWerf and Rev. Peter DeBruyne officiating.</p> <p>Correspondence address: William N. Veenhof, 48 Nello St., St. Catharines, ON L2N 1G7</p>
		<p>Personal</p>	<p>Personal</p>	<p>Personal</p>	
		<p>Personal</p>	<p>Personal</p>	<p>ONE TO ANOTHER</p> <p>Christian companion magazine. Hundreds of readers Canada-wide. Single issue \$5.</p> <p>Write to:</p> <p>#302, 1502-2nd Ave. S. Lethbridge, AB T1J 4A2</p>	

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Obituaries	Teachers	Teachers	Miscellaneous
<p>Sept. 11, 1914 - May 6, 1996 "Bless the Lord, O my soul; And all that is within me, bless His holy name" (Ps.103:1). We give thanks to our heavenly Father that He has promoted our wife, mother and Oma</p> <p>BEATRICE WIERSMA (nee BERENDTJE LEFFERS) to her heavenly home. Beloved wife of Idso Wiersma whom she married May 10, 1940. Predeceased by son Harry (1987). Survived by her husband and children: Minne & Nancy Wiersma — Bowmanville, Ont. Lucy (former wife of Harry) & her husband Jan Visscher — Kitchener, Ont. Alex & Johanna Wiersma — Red Deer, Alta. Idso & Anne Wiersma — Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont. Jenny & John Glasbergen — Burlington, Ont. Alice & Elzo deHaan — Burlington, Ont. Henry & Johanna Wiersma — Cobourg, Ont. Jake & Judith Wiersma — London, Ont. Beatrice & Leo Droppert — Wainfleet, Ont. Beloved Oma of 29 grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren. "Dwelling in His house and beholding His beauty" (Ps.27:4). Correspondence address: 2 White St., Apt. 309, St. Catharines, ON L2N 1Z2</p>	<p>BELLEVILLE, Ont.: Quinte Chr. High School. We are a small (115 students), dynamic Christian High School located on the shores of beautiful Bay of Quinte in the city of Belleville, Ont. We are inviting applications for a teaching position opening for the school year 1996/97. Teaching responsibilities include the areas of history, law, world religions and related fields. Applicants with a Christian college background and a willingness to coach and give leadership in extra-curricular activities will be given preference. A living relationship with Jesus Christ, a love for children and a passion for learning are a must. Please send your applications, with resume to:</p> <p>The Principal Quinte Chr. High School 289 Pinnacle Street Belleville, ON K8N 3B3</p>	<p>FRUITLAND, Ont.: John Knox Memorial Chr. School invites applications for several teaching positions for the 1996-97 school year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * a full-time Grade 1 position * a full-time Grade 5/6 position * a 50% part-time Kindergarten position * a 50% part-time Grade 3 position * a 25% part-time administrative relief position in Grade 8 with a preference in teaching French or music. <p>Please come to the school or call (905) 643-2460 for a teacher application form. The deadline for receiving the completed application forms will be Friday, May 31. For further information, contact the Principal, Mr. J. De Jager.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">* * * *</p>	<p>YOURS FREE! <i>A Christianity That Really Works</i> A Handbook for Living in Continuous Personal Revival</p> <p>300 Page Book - At Your Bookstores \$8.50 - Whitaker House Publisher</p> <p>We want you to have a free introductory copy. Once you've read this book, you may join the many who are so delighted that they order fifty or a hundred copies for friends or fellow church members. <i>"This book is the best I've ever read, next to the Bible, for devotions." -B.C.</i> <i>"We want to give a copy to all joining our church. Send 60." -Pastor E.H., OH</i></p> <p>Clip & mail : CHRISTLIFE, 1642 Michigan Ave., Niagara Falls, NY 14305</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Please send me a free introductory copy of <i>A Christianity That Really Works</i>. I enclose only \$2 for postage.</p> <p>Name _____ Phone _____ Address _____</p>
<p>Teachers</p> <p>SURREY, B.C.: Fraser Valley Chr. High School, an interdenominational school in the Reformed tradition serving families and students in the lower Fraser Valley, has a teaching opening in the area of art for the 1996/97 school year. We are accepting applications for the full-time position of administrative assistant. The qualified individual must be able to handle a broad range of administrative and office functions. Word processing, Desktop Publishing and editing skills are required. Effective interpersonal skills, project management and supervisory abilities are additional requirements. An associate degree or its equivalent with experience in a similar position are required. Applicants should send resumes to:</p> <p>Mr. Al Boerema, Principal Fraser Valley Chr. High School 15353-92 Avenue, Surrey, BC V3R 1C3 Phone (604) 581-1033</p>	<p>BRANTFORD, Ont.: Brantford Chr. School invites applications for a full-time junior teaching position. Teaching of French and music will be a requirement. Please send your application and resume to the principal:</p> <p>Mr. Chris Vander Veen Brantford Chr. School 7 Calvin Street Brantford, ON N3S 3E4 Phone: (519) 752-0433</p> <p>WOODBIDGE, Ont.: Toronto District Chr. High School has a 5/6 position in physical education/science available for the 1996/97 school year. Please send credentials and letters of recommendation to:</p> <p>Ren Siebenga 377 Woodbrige Ave. Woodbridge, ON L4L 2S8 e-mail address: siebenga@tdch.torcon.com</p>	<p>FRUITLAND, Ont.: John Knox Memorial Chr. School invites applications for a part-time teacher assistant position. The successful candidate will be assisting our resource teacher in the area of math remediation during the afternoons of each school day. If you have a love for teaching, patience for exceptional learners, a willingness to learn and a co-operative attitude please consider this exciting opportunity. We await your resume and a letter in which you indicate your strengths for this position. Please deliver or mail your application to:</p> <p>John Knox Memorial Chr. School 795 Hwy. #8 Fruitland, ON L8E 5J3 Phone: (905) 643-2460.</p> <p>The deadline for receiving applications is Friday, May 31. Please contact the Principal, Mr. J. De Jager for more information.</p>	<p>Attention! Attention! Attention! When you fax your display or classified ads to us (particularly obituaries), please type them and check spelling BEFORE you transmit the text. Thank you.</p>
<p>Job Opportunities</p> <p>CLINTON, Ont.: Clinton District Chr. School Society requires, for a period of four weeks, a self-motivated person to promote membership and to do the preliminary work for long- and short-term financial school support. Skills in public relations would be an asset. Salary to be negotiated. Students are welcome to apply. Mail or fax (519-482-7614) resume, including time available, to Mr. Gord Kaastra, Box 545, Clinton, ON N0M 1L0, no later than June 14, 1996.</p>	<p>Summer Job Market</p> <p>Calvin College student with excellent communication, organizational and word processing skills, is looking for any summer time work, starting as soon as possible. Please contact Sharon Vandezande. Phone (905) 934-5954 or fax (905) 937-1130.</p> <p>Job Opportunities</p> <p>Help wanted. Selling produce at Farmers Market. Approx. 30 hours per week. Must be good with people and have driver's licence. Very interesting job. Starting June 7. Phone (905) 774-7391</p>	<p>Anniversaries</p> <p>Samia Gravenhurst 1951 June 6 1996</p> <p>With joy in our hearts and thanksgiving to God we wish to announce the 45th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents</p> <p>JAKE VANDERHEIDE and RIEMIE HIEMSTRA-VANDERHEIDE</p> <p>It is our prayer that God will continue to bless them and keep them in His loving care. We thank them for the blessing they have been to us.</p> <p>Jim & Kelly VanderHeide — Samia Nicholas, Lauren, Matthew, Gilliane</p> <p>Sue VanderHeide — Wasaga Beach Michelle, Steven, David, Jennifer</p> <p>Kathy VanderHeide — Samia Rob, Jackie</p> <p>Joanne & Rick Greidanus — Ancaster Erin</p> <p>Pete & Sonja VanderHeide — Cobourg</p> <p>We will celebrate with an open house on Saturday, June 8, 1996 at the First Chr. Ref. Church, 50 Flittons Rd., Orillia, Ont. from 2:30 - 4:30 p.m. (Best wishes only). Home address: Box 484, Gravenhurst, ON P1P 1T8</p>	<p>Anniversaries</p> <p>LEARNING FOR LIFE IN THE GARDEN</p> <p>Gardening tip</p> <p>Building soil fertility</p> <p>(NC)—An easy way to boost your soil organic matter content is to spread organic materials on the soil surface and let nature do the rest. One of the best organic materials to add is compost.</p> <p>You can also use living plants to add to soil fertility. Green manure crops are crops that you sow specifically to turn back into the soil to boost soil health. Living mulch is a cover crop sown among your garden crops to help suppress weeds and conserve soil moisture.</p> <p>Taking the time to learn about gardening—or any other topic—will increase the enjoyment you get from the activity, and expand your mind! Whether it's for personal or professional reasons, the Association of Canadian Community Colleges urges you to learn-for-life.</p> 

Classifieds

Miscellaneous

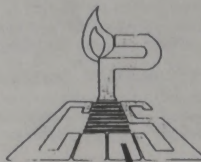
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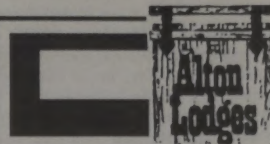


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For An Open House Discussion on:

**Creation Order, Dooyeweerd and
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with

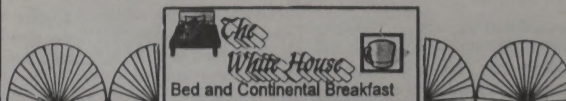
Dr. Hendrik Hart

In Calvinism in general, and in reformational thought in particular, the concept of *creation order* (the God-given structure of reality) has been important. In recent decades, the concept of *order* in all of Western thought has received much attention. Dr. Hart will discuss a paper on the background of his current thinking concerning the work of Herman Dooyeweerd and his associates on creation order, and about his reasons for initiating a renewed discussion of this topic.

Copies of the paper are available and should be read in advance.
Call ICS at 416-979-2331 to request a copy.

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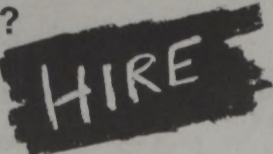
Classifieds/Events

Miscellaneous

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RECREATION: camp counsellor, special event worker, pool attendant



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Stan de Jong
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Calendar of Events

Please submit only brief items. Placement is subject to space availability. Lengthy, multiple-event announcements will be rejected. We reserve the right to edit the material and to charge a nominal, per issue fee per item inserted.

May 25-26 Third annual "Conference for Women in the Chr. Ref. Church," at Jubilee Fellowship CRC, St. Catharines, Ont. Theme from Job 42. Keynote speaker: May Stewart Van Leeuwen. Info.: Nancy Marsman (905) 682-1785 or Margaret Wunderink (905) 934-5589 (#)

May 27 The 26th "Hollandse Dag," 10 a.m., Maranatha CRC, York, Ont. Speaker: Rev. J. Kuntz on: "U staat niet alleen." Info.: (905) 765-4114.

June 1 Second annual "Calgary Chr. School Golf Tournament" in support of Calgary CS Gym fund. Registration per golfer \$130. Info.: (403) 242-2896.

June 1 Shalom Manor's annual "ABC Sale," 8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m., at 12 Bartlett Ave., Grimsby, Ont. Breakfast from 8-10 a.m., coffee at 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Plants, flowers, crafts, toys, bake table and much more. Don't miss this!

June 2 Dutch worship service led by Rev. Ralph Koops, 3 p.m., CRC, Ancaster, Ont.

June 2 The 27th "Hollandse Dag" in Moorefield, Ont. Starts at 10 a.m., in the Community Centre. Speaker: Rev. H. van Essen. Take along your own lunch and coffee cup! (#)

June 7-8 Banquet and conference to celebrate the 25th anniversary of "The Voice of the Martyrs" (founded by Pastor Richard and Mrs. Sabina Wurmbrand), at Ontario Bible College, Toronto, Ont. Info.: phone (905) 276-6210 or fax (905) 276-0228 (#)

June 9 Dutch worship service led by Rev. John D. Hellinga, 3 p.m., Chr. Ref. Church, Aylmer, Ont. Info.: (519) 773-3025.

June 10-13 The "4-Day Evening Walk" at the Botanical Gardens, Burlington, Ont. To pre-register call (905) 383-6319 or write to: 4-Day Evening Walk Committee, P.O. Box 79554, Hamilton, ON L8T 5A2 (#)

June 15 24th Annual "Grunneger Picnic," 10 a.m., Grand River Conservation Area, Rockwood, Ont. For info. contact Harry Klungel, 505 Pinewood Ave., Exeter, ON N0M 1S1

June 19 Snowbirds, please note! The Cypress Garden Winter Ministry (Winterhaven, Fl.) picnic will be held at 10 a.m., Southside Park, Woodstock, Ont. Info.: (519) 285-2904.

July 8-26 "Summer School," sponsored by Wycliffe College and ICS. Theme: "...bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God" (Col.1:10) At ICS, Toronto, Ont. Info.: Chris Barrigar (416) 979-2870 or fax (416) 979-0471 (#).

July 14 Dutch worship service led by Rev. J. Kuntz, 3 p.m., CRC, Ancaster, Ont.

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Zondag 12:00 middag

News

Groups provide support around mental illness and disability

Alan Doerksen

ST. CATHARINES and BURLINGTON, Ont. — Christians with serious illnesses or disabilities and their families are finding that support groups are an effective way of dealing with their problems. Two such groups in Ontario are Conquerors Christian Mission to the Disabled, and Christian Rainbows.

Christian Rainbows Fellowship of Southwestern Ontario is an interdenominational support group especially for families of people with mental illnesses

Christian Rainbows has two large-group meetings a year (usually in April and October) for people from across Ontario. The last one was in Burlington in April and featured a Christian psychologist, Dr. John Toews, speaking on the topic of mental health and the church. About 80 people attended.

Gerry Denbok says he would like Christian Rainbows to grow, but "at this point we are unable to expand." Right now, most people involved with the group are parents of people with

groups dealing with mental illness see family support groups as "a real asset to their work."

Resource people

Besides organizing Christian Rainbows' conferences, the Denboks are resource people on the subject of mental illnesses. They have a sizeable library of books and videos on the subject.

Years ago, people with mental illnesses were institutionalized, but "today they're in the community," Denbok notes. He and Paulina believe more education

each in Kingston, Waterloo and St. Catharines, and one in Calgary.

The St. Catharines group, known as Niagara Conquerors Christian Fellowship, was started shortly after the Toronto group and now has about 30 members.

Hank Fournier and his wife have been part of the Niagara group for 11 years. Before that, Fournier was president of the Toronto Conquerors group. Fournier has spinal scoliosis (curvature) and uses crutches. "I'm disabled but not slowed down," he comments. His wife has cerebral palsy.

Open to others

Niagara Conquerors is "a very encouraging group for handicapped people," says Fournier. Fellowshiping together with other disabled people is an important part of Conquerors, he says. One reason is that disabled people feel less self-conscious when getting together with other disabled people. But Fournier adds that Niagara Conquerors is not limited to Christians or the disabled; it is also open to other interested people.

Niagara Conquerors has a regular monthly meeting that features a guest speaker and music, and a second meeting that focuses on Bible study and prayer. Each June members of all the Ontario groups get together for a retreat.

Transportation can be a problem for disabled people, which is why the Toronto group has now split into three localized groups. Fournier is the driving co-ordinator of the St. Catharines group and often takes people to Conquerors meetings.

In recent years, many churches have become more accessible to disabled people and "more aware of our needs," says Fournier, who attends Bethany Community Church in St. Catharines.



Members of Conquerors Christian Mission to the Disabled relax at a retreat

such as manic depression, schizophrenia and clinical depression. It was started nine years ago and is led by Gerry and Paulina Denbok, a retired couple in Burlington, Ont., who have an adult son with schizophrenia.

Objectives spelled out

The main objectives of Christian Rainbows are:

- to provide a Christian fellowship for parents, brothers, sisters and other persons interested in the welfare of persons with long-term mental illness, with a view to assist them in finding a satisfying and purposeful place in society;
- to search out and provide information relevant to the understanding and helping of persons with this illness;
- to encourage and assist churches in the development of special support programs for persons with long-term mental illness.

mental illnesses. Denbok would like to see siblings become involved, as well as Christians with professional training in this field.

"The great need is for Christians to become involved and for young professionals to become involved," he says. There are "very few Christian professionals involved with ex-psychiatric patients."

Christians treat people with mental illness fairly "according to their knowledge," Denbok says. But Christians need to know more about mental illness. Some believe that praying together with church elders will solve their problems related to mental illness. This can be helpful, but professional help is also needed, says Denbok.

Family support groups have an important role to play in the area of mental health. "In the last 20 years, family organizations have come into their own," he says. Now professional

about mental illnesses is necessary, and they often speak to small groups, at churches and elsewhere, on the subject.

Gerry Denbok is also involved with the local chapter of Friends of Schizophrenics, a secular support group. The Denboks, who attend Fellowship Canadian Reformed Church in Burlington, are helped out by members of their church with their work.

In all these things

Conquerors Christian Mission to the Disabled is an interdenominational support group for physically disabled people that takes its name from Romans 8:37, which states: "in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us" (KJV).

Conquerors started in Toronto in 1967 and has since expanded across Ontario and into Alberta. There are now three Conquerors groups in Metro Toronto, one

News Digest

'Husband'/'wife' too exclusive

WASHINGTON, D.C. (EP) — Public employees should avoid the use of such terms as "husband" and "wife," which may make homosexual co-workers uncomfortable, says the cover story in a newsletter published by the Office of Equal Opportunity of the U.S. National Institutes of Health. Such terms are "too exclusive." The chair of the institute's Gay and Lesbian Employees Forum suggested instead using "partner," "domestic partner" and "significant other," which help "reinforce the concept of a safe workplace for employees who are gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgendered."

Your coffee makes a difference

STOCKHOLM (EP) — An estimated 100 tons of coffee are consumed each year by the Lutheran Church of Sweden, says Dan Melander of the church's environmental board. The church is going to try to use its coffee consumption to make the world a better place. Starting with a year, the church will use only coffee from ecologically sound plantations where working conditions are humane. Of Sweden's 8.7 million inhabitants, 89 per cent are Lutheran Church members.

CompuServe serves pornography?

COLUMBUS, Ohio (EP) — The conservative American Family Association has asked the U.S. Justice Department to investigate pornography on CompuServe. The AFA says CompuServe is the only major online computer service to permit pornography on its own system, though most other services let users link to pornographic sites on the Internet.

The Justice Department forwarded the complaint to the FBI, but the FBI denies it is investigating CompuServe. The AFA asserts that CompuServe is violating the recently passed Communications Decency Act by making pornography easily available to children.

Thinkbit

What you believe is religion; in whom you believe is Christianity.

Anonymous